DOLLSHOUSE WORLD

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QUICK & EASY MAKES

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★ Rooms
★ Shops
★ Gardens

Sheila finds herself in the workroom

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small details

● Issue 351

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welcome

There was a sign, or it could have been a T-shirt, I remember seeing at a show many years ago: "Minis forever, housework whenever."

That came back to me reading about Robina Patterson's one problem with making her beautiful gardening scenes: "It only is hard when I would rather spend my time making miniatures than doing housework," she said. "I have a hard time finding a balance sometimes!"

Carving out time is something that all miniaturists struggle with, and many get round it with early mornings or late nights hunched over mitre saws and tacky glue.

Sheila Caramella's answer was to give herself a permanent spot working on her house in twelfth scale. That's her on the front cover. We all loved the scene here at DHW. So unusual.

It's not always easy to predict what the hardest part of a project will be. Take Colette Cameron's beautiful birthday bash — a colourful scene she made as a thank you for an inspiring online friend. The toughest challenge came after she finished it — the untreated wood meant she couldn't send the box overseas without extensive red tape and fumigation.

But at least you can enjoy Colette's wonderful room this issue, along with a host of other fabulous houses, rooms and shops.

We've got plenty of projects and ideas for you too, including the first part of making a doll from polymer clay. I'm sure your attempts at forming the fingers will be better than mine, which resembled a large bunch of thick pork sausages — hands better suited to a Marvel mutant rather than an elegant Austen heroine. Oh well, as Sue said: "There's always the housework."

Richard.

email: richard@ashdown.co.uk

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Quote of the month:

"As a hobbyist, there's something about miniature anything that captures my imagination"

Ed Helms

HOUSE HUNT
Find the little house hidden inside.
Last issue it appeared on page 22.







Caring for the environment: Here at Dolls House World we're as concerned about the environment as you are. We're doing everything we can to ensure the magazine is produced in the most eco friendly way possible.
Our magazine is printed using vegetable-based inks on an environmentally responsible paper, which is certified by the prestigious FSC® (Forest Stewardship Council), the not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the promotion of responsible forest management worldwide. Our paper also carries the internationally recognised EU Eco-label.
Our local printers, Gemini Print, are just a few miles from the DHW offices. They are one of the leading eco friendly printers in the UK, with both FSC® and ISO 14001 certification. They are backed by a series of environmental credentials that allow them to work under the "Green Printing Label". Our printers are also a sponsor of the Woodland Trust – the UK's leading woodland conservation charity.

Sheila puts herself front and centre

What's better than having a special room devoted to doll's housing? Having a replica in twelfth scale. That's what Sheila Caramella has just created

BY SHEILA CARAMELLA

My little twelfth scale room box was inspired by the fact that the large 10 room townhouse I had just completed was so large that it had to be displayed in a niche in my husband's den where it's very hard to show to anyone.

I had the idea to replicate my basement work area and put it in a shelf in our bookcase. It has doors to keep it hidden unless someone wants to have a closer look at it. Also, the peace and creativity I experienced while working on my doll's house would be easy to enjoy again by making a room box.

A bonus idea came after seeing the Holodeck stand at a show. They take 3D photos and then print them on a 3D printer and voila, you have a mini version of yourself. This made it possible for me to actually be in my workroom in twelfth scale!

A local friend, and high-end cabinet maker made the box. They also hinged the doors and stained it to match the bookcases in my real house, which he had made years ago.

I consulted with Carl Sahlberg who is a lighting expert for miniatures, especially with LED lights, to help me since it all had to be surface mounted before I could finish the walls. There are no wires or connections on the outside of the box. He also helped me with the switch which turns on the lights when the door is opened. He also made the shop lights.

The walls were finished with a cement stencil kit on heavy card stock and glued in place after they were dry.

I made the replica of the doll's house with balsa wood, the wire shelving with aluminium tubing and jewellery findings. The peg board is a replica of the one I have in my real work area, only the miniature version is much neater.

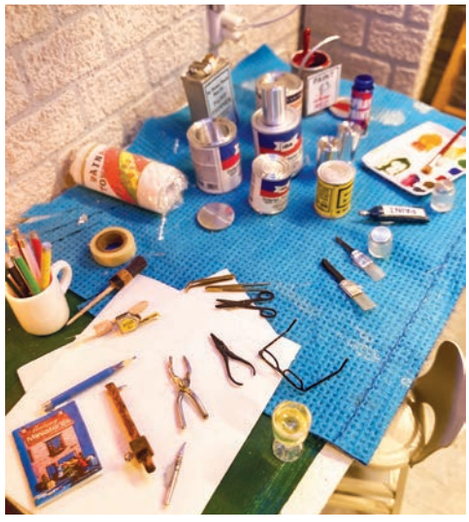
My dad was a gifted carpenter and gunsmith and my sister and I spent many hours with him making little things using scraps we found in his shop. The red trunk on the lower shelf of the workbench is a mini version of one he made to hold our doll's clothes when we were young.

The mug on the work bench has his nickname on it and was made years ago by a local miniature shop as part of a memory dome I made for his birthday. I 'borrowed' these two things for this room box to honour his memory.

I'm a retired art teacher and interior designer and mother of two adult children. My husband of 56 years is very supportive of my hobby at least once he got over the cost of my investments.

My latest finished project is a conservatory since I'm also a gardener. I don't know what I'll do next but I will keep 'mini-ing'!







Top right: *A full view of the twelfth scale room box that Sheila made.*
Right: *The work table is full of all the things a mini maker needs to create mini magic!*







Above right: *Miniature Sheila having fun in her workspace.*
Below: *A closer look at the basement wall.*
Below right: *The room box has the perfect lighting for a basement workspace.*





Garden ideas bloomed as Robina found minis

Robina's gardening passion used to be contained to full-size pots, but then she discovered miniatures and a whole new world started to flower

BY PAM NORTH



Robina Patterson initially was focused on making small outdoor gardens in pots on her deck. After about five years of that endeavour, she became frustrated with the plants' lack of uniformity in scale, and items being damaged by the sun. She still wanted to make a personal birthday garden for a friend, however, so she began searching for specific items that would be unique to her friend's interests.

It was in that process that she stumbled across online shops featuring doll's house miniatures, leading her to blogs and social media posts of people making and using miniatures in exciting ways that she had never considered.

Then she discovered several people making contemporary miniature houses, and that was when she was hooked. At age 50 and retired, she bought her first doll's house three years ago. From there she started a page on Instagram, attended several large shows, and The Guild School in Castine, Maine in 2019. While she now works mainly on indoor scenes, she also creates outdoor and gardening scenes.

She had no formal training in the miniature field, so she is basically self-taught.

''I came to miniatures very green and knowing very little,'' she explained. ''It has been a huge learning curve! I like to take life-size things and recreate them in miniature. I love design, and miniatures give me an opportunity to create rooms that in real-life might not be possible or realistic or practical. For me the biggest difficulty involved with working in miniature is being able to get good magnification, and resources for learning. I wish there were more opportunities to learn online.'' She finds inspiration from various sources: other makers, Pinterest, the world around her, and she belongs to the Miniature Club of British Columbia, of which she has been treasurer for almost three years.

She has a supportive family when it comes to her interest, making it easy to combine home life with working in miniature.



''It only is hard when I would rather spend my time making miniatures than doing housework,'' she joked. ''I have a hard time finding a balance sometimes!'' She is fortunate to have a small room in her house in which to work. ''I think it would be correctly described as a den. It was originally our office, with my husband using one side, but I slowly have pushed him out, and now I use the space exclusively.''

One of her recent pieces is The Potting Bench in twelfth scale. With its detailed spectrum of tools, plants, and assorted other garden items, it is a perfect microcosm of that ideal refuge for a gardener. She came up with the idea for it when she saw someone use an old door on Pinterest as the back of a potting bench. She liked the concept, and with her love of gardening, she wanted to recreate it in miniature.

She then saw that someone had put a miniature scene under a cloche (a small, translucent, protective dome), and she adopted that idea for displaying her potting bench. The project evolved from several kits that she had purchased and combined for the scene.

The potting bench was made from a miniature door, and the bench was cut from wood; both were made by

Left: *The beautiful blue hanging flowers were made by Yevheniia Kudriavtseva.*





her. The paviors were purchased. The grass, used mainly for scenery in model making, was purchased, and she designed the brick/grass base upon which the house rests. She painted and aged several of the items in the scene, and she also used dried coriander to mimic moss/grass between the paviors.

There were other artists whose work was included in the piece: Yevheniia Kudriavtseva made the beautiful blue flowers in the hanging basket; the mini Crocs were purchased; the stack of drawers beside the bench on the ground were made by Meghan Boo and the little bird on the top of the door was made by Barbara Ann Meyer.

Above: *A view of the diorama showing both side of this unique miniature piece. Shepherd Miniatures made the twelfth scale Crocs.*
Right: *A closer look at top of the potting bench.*

The idea for the piece evolved in process, as she explained. ''I started with just the bench, then collected some things over time. It wasn't until I finally sat down and finished the bench that I formed the rest of the scene around it. Designing the bench part from a picture, with no plans, probably was the most challenging. I love the bench itself, but I also am quite pleased with how the brick and grass base







Above: *Another of Robina's projects is this twelfth scale greenhouse inside an old lantern.*



turned out. That part really was fun.''

She has no plans to sell it, preferring to keep it on display in her home. ''I feel that minis can be shown in many forms, and they can be displayed throughout one's house.'' She so far does not sell her pieces widely, only occasionally at a doll's house show or to an interested collector.

Robina still is an avid gardener in real life, although minis have taken over some of her gardening time. She loves creating small vignettes and using them for display; it is a way to showcase one of the things she enjoys doing in her non-mini life.

She is optimistic about the future of miniatures. ''I think miniatures are here to stay. There is a magic to them that brings joy to so many, and with the number of people now sharing them on social media, I think the interest is growing even more.''

Looking forward to what's next for her and her creations, she shared her intentions: ''I want to finish the current house on which I am working. It has taken many hours, and it is filled with things I love. Then I may make a series of room boxes. After that, I will be trying to get to and make my long list of imagined projects!''

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etsy: FloralDecorMini.etsy.com

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Marcia designs fine furniture & upholstery



Marcia McClain has taken her career as an interior designer to new and delightful miniature heights while creating furniture collectors have loved for many years

BY JOAN MCKENZIE



For many years now Marcia McClain has been a well-known custom miniature furniture maker from North Granby, Connecticut. She also creates matching window treatments, framed and matted prints, rugs and accessories for miniature rooms.

In 1979 Marcia's husband signed her up for "Kit of the Month" club, which was offered by the X-Acto company, further leading her to a nearby miniature doll's house store. Marcia had fondly remembered having a tin doll's house as a child, but her eyes were soon opened to the finely evolving art form compared to the miniatures of the late 70s. It was not long before her desire to create in miniature overtook her original career, so she reinvented herself one more time to become Marcia 2.0.

Prior to her miniature induction, Marcia had been a freelance interior designer and holds a degree in interior design. She had many years of experience working for a major department store prior to expanding on her own to limitless possibilities. These days she has precious grandchildren who get quite enthused about all of her latest creations. It is always a delight to have someone this special in your life who lives nearby and also admires your work. The muse in this case is an all-encompassing force of mutual love to be inspired by.

Most of her sales happen at the various miniature shows across the USA as well as from repeat customers. She is known as an active and enthusiastic IGMA Artisan who has conducted classes at the Guild Show and Guild School. She also spends time at some of the local doll's house shops who have hired her to give demonstrations. Marcia plans to keep creating and working with collectors. When she finds time, she will make more items for herself and pass them down to her family.

Marcia loves it when she creates a miniature scene and watches as most people look at photographs and become initially misled into thinking that they are looking at a full-size room. This reaction never provokes anything but delight in most miniaturists.

The most challenging part to her job has always been finding enough sophisticated and beautiful fabrics to work with. If a print is requested by a customer, the scale must be exactly right in order for it to work as a refined miniature piece. Marcia's favourite tool is a plain orange stick that has been worn to a silky smoothness from continued use.



I have been fortunate enough to have several commissioned pieces of furniture and bedding made by Marica from several years back. When I look at my own miniature collection, I always associate the artisan who had brought my request to life, and I remember how their suggestions have made my original requests so much better than I originally imagined.

My bunk bed set for the boys' bedroom is a case in point. I gave Marcia the colour scheme I was hoping for, but when I saw what she created I was overwhelmed with gratitude. To this day I have the identical feeling looking at what she has made for me over time. And I should add, everything that she has made has also been very fairly priced.

At one point I wanted a colour scheme for my living room to have the colours of "Sully – from the Pixar

Above: *This lovely bed was created to remind Marcia of a bed in her grandma's farmhouse.*

Left: *The couch Marcia made for Joan to match the 'Monsters Inc." movie theme and wing chair in ribbed silk.*









movie 'Monsters Inc.''. Not only did she get the colours exactly right, but she also added a small striped trim to the bottom of the couch that is just the right finishing touch. I have never been anything but short of elated for her efforts. Marcia is exceptionally brilliant!

One of the few positive things resulting from this terrible pandemic is that more people are expanding their miniature collections and investing in higher quality items instead of buying the mass-produced items from China. Marica and all of the other fine miniaturists that I know are quite hopeful that this recent surge of interest in all things small will continue for a long time.

Marcia plans to continue to keep creating when and if demand abates. If that happens, she will begin to make some lovely items for her own doll's house, that will eventually pass down to her beloved grandchildren.

Top left: *Living room of the antique house done with draperies that tie all the colours together.*
Top right: *The draperies are done in a patterned silk to emphasise the height on the room.*
Above left: *Brass bed dressed for a man's attic bedroom.*
Above right: *A white on white woven ribbon spread for a Roger Gutheil four poster to be positioned against wallpaper with a checked bolster and wing chair as an accent to the wallpaper pattern.*
Below left: *Ladies chair done in soft colours and petal skirt.*



Above: *Simple swag and jabot valance over straight drapes made elegant with rich colours.*
Above right: *A bed by Keith Bougourd was replicated from a bed in Ann's Fairfax House.*
Left: *Bow canopy bed by Roger Gutheil dressed simply with soft gathers for use against a floral striped wallpaper.*





LITTLE LINKS:

McBay Miniatures
tel: 001-860-653-3945
email: mpmcclain@cox.net
web: www.mcbayminiatures.com

Sewing room is set in a jewel box of little gems

Kathie McDonough made a wide range of dolls to adorn the jewellery box she bought from a charity shop, and the result has Sandra reaching for the superlatives

BY SANDRA HARDING



I often feel a twinge of envy about some of the amazing creations I write about for you, and this one is another of those that I really, really wish was mine.

I rarely run out of superlatives, so if I say that this is exquisite, scrumptious, adorable, delightful and simply lovely, then I can just finish the article there. However, to stop you giving me a bad time I asked the owner, Kathie McDonough, to send me photographs and tell me all about it.

It's a jewellery box, which measures 3.5'' high x 7'' deep x 12'' long, and was bought from a charity shop, known as opportunity shops in Australia, Kathie's' home. The interesting and different dolls measure from ¾'' for the smallest, to 2'' for the largest. There are also nice contrasts of colour in the different swags of fabric and laces, and in the base of the box there is 5'' tall Millicent, the lady owner, in her sewing room. She is often surprised to find herself lying down when the box is closed, but is glad of the rest.

Kathie was inspired to make dolls thirty years ago after a visit to a lady with her own collection of porcelain dolls. It reminded her of the doll shows she visited with her grandmother and, as a result, she bought a kiln and found a teacher. Very soon she was making antique reproduction dolls and entering competitions just for pleasure. In 2001, after joining the Victorian Association of Miniature Enthusiasts, Kathie began making miniature people and within a year had her own stall at their annual show, where she also began teaching at workshops. Like many things there comes a time when a change is needed, so Kathie gave up selling and began collecting, to get some fun back into her hobby.



The gorgeous (another superlative — see, I told you I rarely run out of them) dolls in this box are all made from porcelain and dressed by Kathie, using quality laces and fabrics, and Kathie has collected the other various accessories from talented miniaturist friends. I did ask how the dolls stay on the shelves when the box is closed and, of course, Kathie uses either double sided tape, or soft wax. The larger pieces lay on the floor with Millicent when the box is closed, just to keep her company.

She believes that a room without people or animals is just a room full of beautiful things, but once people are there they become the story, and I see just what she means. Most of the dolls Kathie makes now are commissions and I am not surprised to hear she is always very busy.

Kathie tells me that she has other boxes and briefcases with different subjects: a hat shop in a hat box, an underwear shop in a book box and a billiard room in a briefcase. Hopefully we will get to see them all. I look forward to feeling envious all over again, and I will probably use even more superlatives.







‘Kathie gave up selling and began collecting to get some fun back into her hobby.’

Quick and easy

Sandra shows how to make simple books that look authentic

BY SANDRA HARDING

Cut out the foam board to size of the printed book from the Cutouts page, using a craft knife to get clean edge.

Cut out the cutouts of the books, or cut paper to size. Gently fold along the spine.



Decide on the three edges of the foam board that will show, and gently score along the three edges, not cutting, but simply creating the look of book pages.

Colour the scored edges and any white paper showing with gold felt tip, to look like book edges,

If you want to add a book mark, make a tiny slit in the bottom of the "book" and glue in a tiny little ribbon.

Glue the unscored edge onto the centre of the book cover (the spine of the book). Make adjustments to get it straight, and let it dry a little.

Gently glue the front and back of the book onto the front and back of the foam board, and let it dry. Trim if needed.

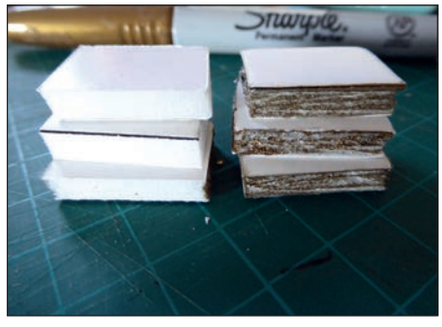
If the book is to be laid on a table for instance, decorate the front with stick-ons.

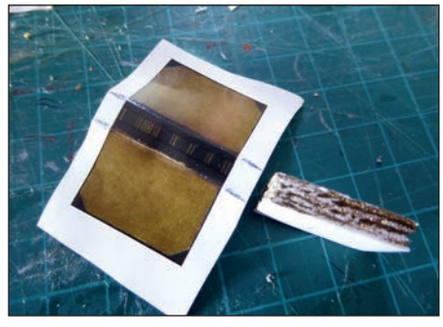


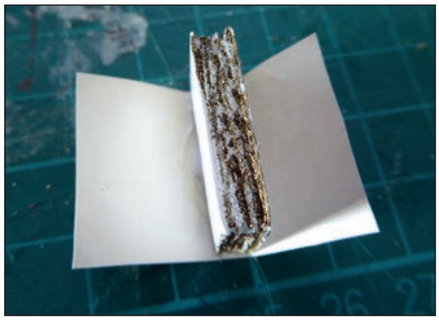
You will need

- Foam board, cut to various
- Twelfth scale book size Dolls House World cutouts of books (see P35 this issue, or use previous Cutouts), or pretty paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Craft knife
- Gold felt tip, or similar
- Stick on jewels, stick-ons for cards, or any decoration you fancy













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Little House at the Priory
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The Luggage Lady
Masters Miniatures
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Mouse House Miniatures
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Victoria Heredia Guerbos











Cliffside Cottage takes little to new heights

Jane Crosland has taken another kit from model railway suppliers Metcalfe Models and created a tiny cottage on a cliff that's full of detail

BY SANDRA HARDING

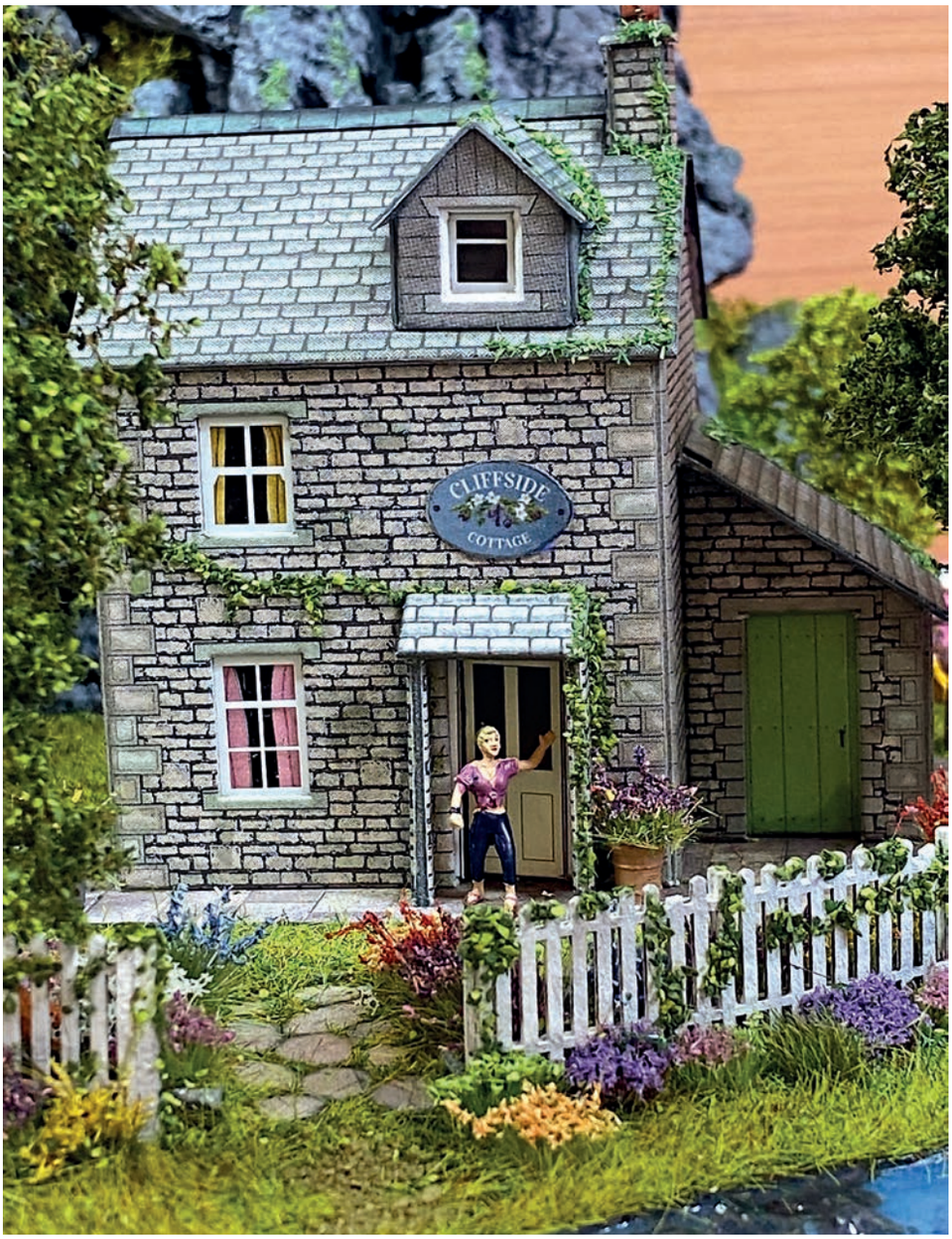
This little 1/76th scale beauty is yet another creation from the very talented, and inventive Jane Crosland. How could I resist showing it to you?

The only thing that Jane did not make is the cottage itself, and that was a kit from Metcalfe, which she modified, so I guess she made that too! It was the amazing cliffs that really caught my attention — they are made from cork used in vivariums, and are just beautifully and realistically placed. Cliffside Cottage measures 14'' by 10'' wide and is crammed full of detail.

We have featured Jane's creations before, Crazy Cat Lady, in issue 350 and The Castle in issue 344. These are









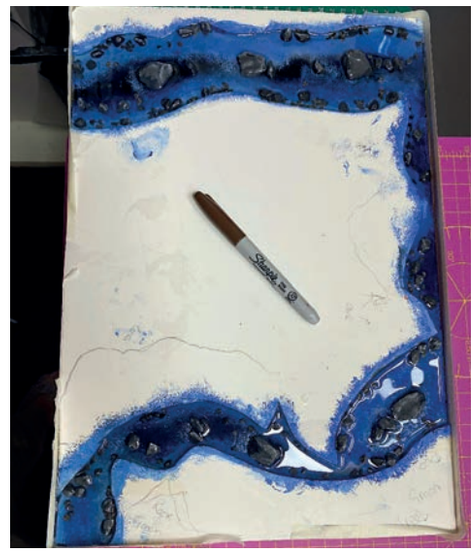
all made using just her imagination and craft items that are easily obtainable, usually from model railway shops like Metcalfe. For other people they might just be a collection of random articles, but in Jane's magic hands, they turn into something quite lovely.

The water is created using resin. Jane paints the wooden base first, adds rocks and stones and when it's dry she adds the resin. The trees are all made from seafoam, which are strategically placed for effect, and the moss and











greenery are mostly sphagnum moss. The lovely flowers in the garden are various shades of Flowersoft and the picket fence is made from card.

The family (all model railway figures) are having a barbecue and Mavis is in her element, as she watches her brother cooking the long-awaited feast. The dog is also very interested and hopes to get the leftovers, if there are any. Mavis's husband Geoff is sitting on the bridge, wishing it was all over so he could go fishing. The rest of the family are simply hungry and enjoying the sunshine.

Two things I really must mention here that I love. The washing on the line, all blowing the same way – such attention to detail, and Jane's amazing use of backdrops in all of her creations. The best I have ever seen.

Once again, it makes me want to rush off and look at model railways - again! I reckon this won't be the last of these little delights either.

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Yanki finds a passion in creating her doll's house

This wonderful house, designed and built by Yanki Elgina, started as a home for the dolls she'd just created but the people have long taken a back seat

BY CHARLOTTE MERRYMAN

Yanki Elgina has always liked to paint, sculpt and create handmade things so when she decided to make a doll's house she didn't think there'd be too much trouble.

"I thought that making a doll's house is not a big deal," Yanki told us. "I thought that I would buy all the miniature furniture from a shop and my house would be finished."

It didn't turn out that way. Yanki, who lives in Belarus, designed and built the house you see here, and made a lot of the stuff in it. Now she's totally hooked on miniatures.

She said: "With time I understood that miniatures isn't only a hobby — it can be real art and now I think I will make miniatures for a long time."

Yanki had been making dolls when she first thought about creating a house to put them in. Now dolls have taken a back seat.

The wonderful house she made from scratch measures 70 cm deep, 80 cm wide and 70 cm high. The Garden House and glass workshop are separate on the left side of the main house. Yanki intends to add more rooms on the right side to give it a bit of balance.


Atelier du Cuivre


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‘With time I understood that miniatures isn’t only a hobby — it can be real art’















> Building a doll's house takes a lot of skill and a lot of time.



Yanki said: ''In my house you can see manufactured items and some items made by amazing artists, but most things in my house I made myself: dolls, sculpting, furniture, textiles, the little garden.''

Yanki created the little ghost in the hall that greets visitors by the mirror with a well-aged frame. She bought the staircase from a shop, but it was plastic and she didn't like it much. So she's made it look like an old wooden staircase. The traditional Japanese doll, flowers and beautiful chandelier were all made by her.

In the living room there is still a lot to do, but all the furniture was purchased and modified, with the exception of cabinets with dishes. There is a window to a small garden with a fountain and lighting.

In the kitchen the two cabinets on the right and the table were bought and modified, but all the rest of the furniture and stove were made by Yanki. A collection of baking dishes were bought and assembled over several years. The food was made by other craftsmen.

The bedroom contains a wardrobe which she made after seeing the Boggart in the Wardrobe in the Harry Potter film. The bedroom has a door to a small toilet and access to a spiral staircase leading to the second floor, as well as a small balcony.

There is also a children's room on the second floor where Yanki modified the bed, rocking chair, floor lamp and chandelier. For the built-in wardrobe under the stairs she used a fragment of a screen.

The cabinet on the left, the dolls, the horse, the chest for toys, the book with the ship were made by her, while some of the toys were made by other artists. On the third floor, there is a sewing workshop, an office and a bathroom. A vintage cast iron bathtub inspired Yanki to create the garden house which was made from natural stone.

Of course the house is not finished yet, and Yanki says every room needs some work. It took a while but she now realises ''building a doll's house takes a lot of skill and a lot of time.''





Brandi's birthday box is a thank-you full of fun

Colette made this colourful roombox as a special gift for an inspiring new friend she met online, but sending it proved the biggest obstacle of all

BY PAM NORTH



What Australian artist Colette Cameron loves most about miniatures is that every project is different, each incorporating a unique style and context.

"I really enjoy the process of building my mind's images into a 3D form," she said. "I originally started with building real furniture but quickly ran out of room, so miniatures allow me to build in a smaller scale and still get the satisfaction of creating snapshots of spaces in time. My natural inclination is toward modern pieces and products."

Her latest project, a room box she calls Brandi's Birthday, is pure fun with all the joyous elements of a party alive with bright colours, confections, flowers, presents and ornamentation.

The project had an interesting beginning in that its creation was inspired by a purely emotional reason. Usually somewhat introverted by nature, Colette confronted her shyness by starting up a Facebook page, soon making one special acquaintance, Brandi, via that venue. Over time, Colette came to rely on Brandi's posts and helpful messages as inspiration, and Brandi became somewhat of a muse for her.

> 'Give me some wood and power tools and I am the happiest girl alive!'

Colette decided to create something that was a direct representation of her new friend.

"This is the first project where I stepped back and allowed someone else to conceptualise a theme," she explained. "Brandi chose colours, themes, and items that she wished included, and I created what I could from her ideas. Although the concept was not my own, the final realisation of the project was what I had hoped to achieve. I wanted it to remind me of Brandi, her personality, her sense of fun and joy.

"The entire project was hand-built, nothing ready-made, using my personal process for figuring out ways to create everything. All ran quickly and smoothly with no difficulties until the project was completed; then the true problems began. After attempting to get the room box in the mail, we realised, much to our chagrin, that posting the project had become a stalemate. Its construction from untreated pine meant that the project did not meet customs requirements, and it needed extensive paperwork and fumigations. We spent weeks trying to figure out how to meet all the rules and regulations before having to admit defeat from the red tape involved in moving it









Above right: *The birthday cake display.*
Right: *More treats to eat than you can count.*

outside of Australia.

"So, if anyone out there has successfully sent a project from Australia to Canada, please contact me! For years I have made projects that were purely for my own enjoyment. With Brandi's Birthday I wanted to try making something with an emotive base for a friend, designing it as a thank-you for all the support, advice, and encouragement that Brandi has provided."

Colette still is desperately trying to figure out how to ship it to Canada











Left: *A true celebration of colour and a great way to say thank you.*

''without having to sell a kidney'', as she joked. For the moment, it remains bundled up and sitting on a shelf waiting to meet its owner, as Colette is determined that the project will be unwrapped only by Brandi.

Colette cited another favourite aspect about the piece as being ''it was designed to create a sense of proportion and have an even flow throughout. With all my projects I concentrate on making sure that no single piece stands out above the others, and I work in a circular pattern to ensure that colours are all evenly distributed throughout in layers. So for me, I am delighted that the entire project balanced out in a blaze of colour.

'Also, the creating of the building was fun; give me some wood and power tools and I am the happiest girl alive! I love working with power tools, and having access to them has meant that I'm not constricted to scale and complexity of buildings or furniture.''

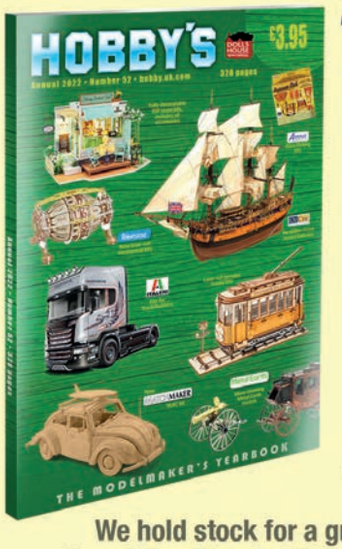
Colette is another of those miniaturists who is completely self-taught. ''When I first started building miniatures I was completely unaware that a world-wide miniature community existed. I just plodded along in the garage obliviously for years.''

She usually wakes around 3am in order to get a minimum of ten hours a day in pursuing her craft, and seems to encounter very few difficulties involved with working in miniature, with a couple of exceptions: ''having to wait until appropriate times to be able to switch on my tools, and the annoyance of waiting for materials to become available, but I usually just figure out ways around that.''

As for what's next for her and her creations, again nothing seems to stand in her way. ''Oh dear, so many ideas!'' she exclaimed. ''I believe that I will just keep making room boxes until it is time to put me in the ground. It would be nice one day to be able to sell some completed works, but this is little more than a pipe dream at this point in time.''

> ‘I believe that I will just keep making room boxes until it is time to put me in the ground.’

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Pastry chef whips up Sweet Berries

BY SANDRA HARDING

When we are out and about one of our simple pleasures in life is to find an adorably tempting little tea shop, with a window full of cakes.

Amy Tkatch is lucky to have created her own, even if it's only in twelfth scale. It measures 12'' long, 7'' wide and 8'' high.

This delightful little shop is actually a kit purchased online, and was made in China. It contained all the walls of the building, the furniture and indeed all the accessories too. This meant that Amy didn't have to make any of the cakes, and many other fiddly bits. She did of course have to assemble all the furniture and many other bits, but gave up when it came down to the teacups.

It was at this point that Amy realised that she didn't like putting together the tiny stuff but carried on anyway, and did the best she could



(looks really good to me).

The electrics included in the kit rather intimidated Amy, so she opted for a battery light, and I don't blame her. As this was Amy's first ever build I think that she chose very well what she could and couldn't do, a lesson we often learn when it's too late!

I love the amount of detail here, including the plants, flowers, curtains and table covers – all blending perfectly. The attention to detail on the outside is just as good as the inside, and Amy loves the fact that the cafe closes up and keeps the dust out.

This almost accidental project started when Amy got out her childhood doll's house and decided that she wanted to get into miniatures





again. What better place to start than with a kit and, being a pastry chef, Sweet Berries cake shop seemed the perfect fit. It took Amy about fifteen hours to do and she just loves the amount of detail, which meant that she gave very little thought about the layout and what to put in the cafe.

The planning and organising had already been done for her and she tells me she will surely get another one, as they are fast and easy, and the progress is fast. The instructions were not particularly good but Amy watched videos of the build, which helped her tremendously.

I think it's a delightful little build, and I look forward to seeing more.

■ Similar all-in-one kits are available from Hobby's. See their advert on P.29.

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Jane creates souk full of memories



Jane Walster sent us these photos of a Middle Eastern souk she's made using polymer clay, felt, beads, wire and paper. Jane told us: ''I enjoy making miniatures that represent international students I have had the pleasure to know during my travels.''







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Beautiful lace bedcover can fit any bed height



Moira Chaplin shares her pattern for a Shetland lace bedcover, which can be altered to fit any bed height

BY MOIRA CHAPLIN

What you do

Cast on 78 sts

Rows 1-5: Knit

Row 6: K3 Purl to last 3sts K to end

Row 7: Knit

Row 8: As row 6

Row 9: K5, K2 tog. Ml (K4, K2 tog. Ml) repeat to last 5 sts. K5

Row 10: As row 6

Row 11: Knit

Row 12: As row 6

Row 13: K9 Ml K2 tog. tbl. (K4, Ml K2 tog, tbl.)

Repeat to last 7 sts. K7

Rows 14, 15, 16: As rows 10, 11 and 12.

Rows 17 to 32: Repeat rows 6 to 13 twice more.

This forms the 'tuck in' at the pillow end of the bed.

From now on every row will start with 'wool forward knit 2 together'. This forms the loops down the side of the top of your bed cover where the stitches will be picked up to knit the feather and fan Shetland lace pattern along the sides.

Row 33: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl (Ml, K2 tog.) repeat to last 5 sts K to end

Row 34: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3sts. K3 (The last stitch is made into the wool forward loop made at the beginning of the previous row).

Row 35: W fwd. K2 tog. Knit to end

Row 36: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl last 3 sts. K.3

Row 37: W fwd. K2 tog. K7 (Ml, K2 tog. tbl, K4) repeat to last 7 sts Knit to end.

Rows 38, 39,40: As rows 34, 35 and 36.

Rows 40 – 216: Repeat rows 33 to 40 23 times more - until you have 96 loops along each edge of your knitting. This is where the drop at the bottom of your bedcover starts.

Row 217: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl (Ml, K2 tog.) repeat to last 3 sts. K3

Row 218: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3sts. K3

Row 219: Foundation row for feather and fan pattern W fwd. K2 tog. Kl K4 (Kl, Ml 6 times K6) repeat to end (114 stitches).

Row 220: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3 sts. K3

Row 221: W fwd. K2 tog. K to end

Row 222: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3 sts. K3

Row 223: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl, K2 tog. 3 times, (Kl Ml 6 times, K2 tog 6 times) repeat to last 15 sts. 1, (Ml,K.1 6mes, K2 tog 6 times) repeat to last 15 sts, Kl, Ml 6 times, K2 tog. 3 times, K.3.

Repeat rows 220 – 223 nine times more and Rows 221- 222 once more

Lacy edging

The bedspread illustrated has a drop of 2.25 inches. You can lengthen or shorten here. Cast on 4 sts at end of last row.

Working on these 4 stitches and picking up 1 sts on each alternate row from main body of work proceed as follows:

Row Lace 1: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl K2 tog tbl (one sts from the lacy edge and one from the main body of work) turn.

Row Lace 2: Slip 1 purl-wise, K.3

Repeat the above two rows until all stitches along the main body of work have been used up. Cast off loosely.

Side drops

Starting from the bottom of the tuck in section, pick up 96 loops. This is where it is useful to have needles

You will need

- 1 x 20 gm ball Coats Mercer Crochet Cotton 80 (DMC 80 can be used -approx 3 balls)
- Two size 19 needles with points at both ends
- 0.6 crochet hook - in case of dropped stitches

Abbreviations

K: Knit, P: Purl, M1: Make one by bringing wool to the front of needle, tbl: through back of loops, M/B: Ml by knitting into both front and back of stitch, FWD: Forward

> 'Should you need to join a new ball of yarn do NOT do it at the beginning of a new row.'

TOPTIP

Should you need to join a new ball of yarn do NOT do it at the beginning of a new row. Always join yarns by using two strands over a few stitches

with points at both ends.

Row 1: With right side facing W fwd. (K 1, Make 1 by knitting into back of stitch (M/B) twice, Knit to end (99 stitches)

Row 2: W fwd. (Kl, Make 1 by knitting into back of stitch) twice Purl to last 3 sts. Knit 3 (102 stitches)

Row 3: Foundation row for feather and fan W fwd. K2 tog Kl, K3 (Kl Ml six times K6) to end of row (105 sts)

Row 4: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3 sts. K3

Row 5: W fwd. K2 tog. K to end

Row 6: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl Purl to last 3 sts. K3

Row 7: W fwd. K2 tog. Kl, K2 tog. 3 times, (Kl Ml 6 times, K2 tog 6 times)

Repeat to last 15 sts., Kl,Ml 6 times, K2 tog. 3 times, K.3

Repeat Rows 4 to 7 nine times more then

Rows 4 and 5 once casting on 4 stitches at end of last row

Lacy edging

Work the same as edging on the bottom drop. Sew in any loose ends.

Make second side drop to match.

Reward yourself with a large gin and tonic.





Children's books are fun to make



Step 1. Carefully cut out all of the book pages from the Cutouts opposite. Then glue the covers to thin card.



Step 4. Glue the front inside page to the inside of the front cover, leaving just a little edging around the three sides.



Step 7. To make up the sketch pad – cut out the pages and glue the covers to thin card.



Step 2. Fold the pages into concertinas – making sure that you fold the pages in the correct order.



Step 5. Glue the spine of the pages and the last inside page – and fold the cover around.



Step 8. Carefully pack the pages and covers together, and run glue along the top edge, making sure that you glue every page. Leave to dry.



Step 3. Glue the backs of the pages together to form a book.

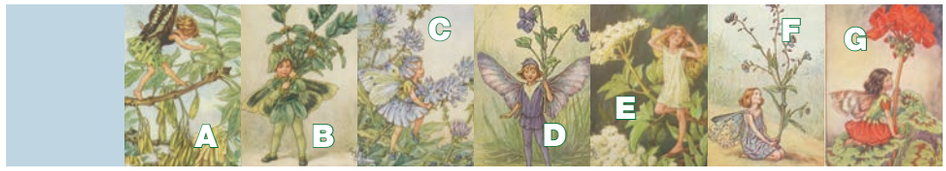


Step 6. Trim off the surplus cover.

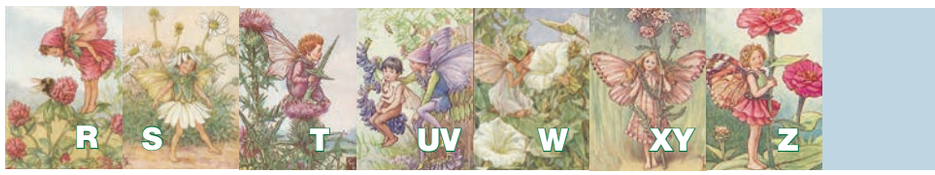


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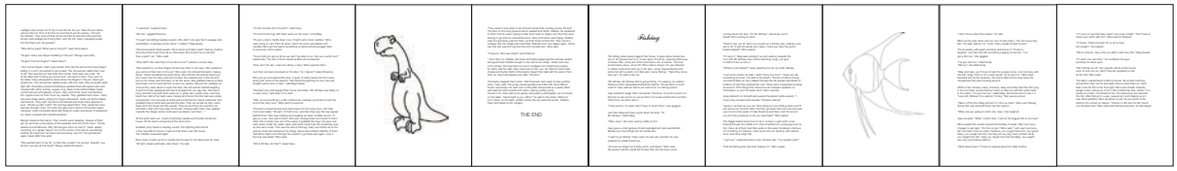
THE CUTOUTS PAGE













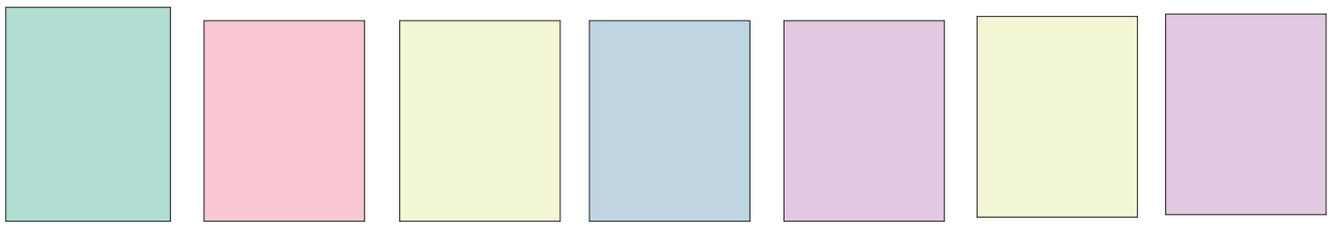
Glue covers to thin card



Covers for the books - glue to thin card before making up books







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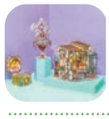
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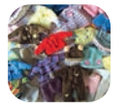
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GET LISTED: If you have an Etsy store, make sure you're reaching thousands of miniaturists around the world with an advert in DHW's Etsy Shop Directory. It costs as little as £14.99 a month. Call Maria on +44 (0) 7730 622416 or email maria@ashdown.co.uk to find out more.

These sites are free to browse without subscribing to Etsy.



CLUB NEWS

New club holds demos and even a show



We're always delighted to hear from any club. This month we drop in on the new Bristol & Bath group

BY SANDRA HARDING

The Bristol & Bath Dolls House Club was only started in January this year by organiser Debbie Scott, alongside Jill Friendship who is the chairperson. Other members are Jo, Jackie, Marianne, Dave, Chris, Jill, Heidi, Bo, and Belle with some of the members organising and demonstrating at specific meetings.

For instance, the members were particularly interested in making curtains. On the very first session Marianne showed them how to make swags and tails, Jill showed how to pleat curtains using hairspray, and Debbie demonstrated pleating using pva glue and a pleater. Making curtains was just one of the many ideas that formed as the club discussed what they wanted to learn, and also to find out who had any particular skills they could pass on in the way of tutorials.

A schedule was worked out and the club had the programme for the first few months. One month the club was making a housemaid's box, with kits prepared beforehand by Debbie, who was the tutor for the session. As a surprise she also supplied the kits to make "muddy boots" as Debbie had some spares. Another meeting as a result of popular request was about lighting a doll's house, which was to be demonstrated by Debbie's husband Andy.

The next meeting will be about dressing dolls, taught by Marianne, who is a seamstress. After that members can look forward to dressed trunks by Debbie, and the month after Jill will show the members how to weave a basket.

Considering that this club is newly formed, they seem to have a lot going on. For further information please contact Debbie at s.debbie65@yahoo.co.uk or join the Bath and Bristol Dolls House Facebook page.

The club meet on the third Tuesday of every month from 7-9 pm with members paying £2 entry, and that includes tea and coffee and very often a nice treat bought in by a member. They also have a table of free items and sales table for members. The meetings are held at Saltford Hall, Wedmore Rd, Saltford, Bristol, BS31 3BY.

The club were planning to hold a doll's house fair at the above address on Sunday April 24 from 10am - 3pm. All will be welcome.











Hang herbs on a rack in your garden shed



This delightful garden wall planter will brighten up a mini garden or potting bench, and it's great fun to put together

BY ELIZE VAN ES

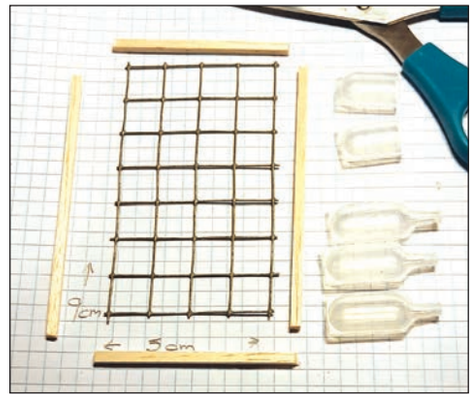


Today was a lovely sunny day — I could almost hear spring coming. I do enjoy all seasons, but I am so looking forward to planting flowers, and herbs and seeing them grow in the garden. Thank goodness for miniatures! We can get a head start on spring and dream, decorate and plant in miniature.

Want to join in the fun? Here's an easy to make miniature vertical herb garden. Don't be afraid to use other measurements. Just work with the materials you've got and adjust the size a bit if necessary. Have fun and keep enjoying the little things in life!

You will need

- Welded wire
- Balsa wood 5 x 5 mm
- Acrylic paint - black, green, brown, amber, gold antic
- Cinnamon powder
- Hairspray
- Ageing water - 2 drops of brown acrylic paint, 2 drops of black acrylic paint and a lot of water
- Watercolours
- Plastic eye drop seal caps or another mould that will work for you
- Metal needles
- (Linen) paper
- Prints of your favourite herb labels - or see Cutouts on P35



Step 1. Cut 4 pieces of balsa wood to fit around the piece of wire. (Use the wire to measure). If you're using balsa don't worry about pieces of wire sticking out. You can squeeze them into the balsa when assembling.

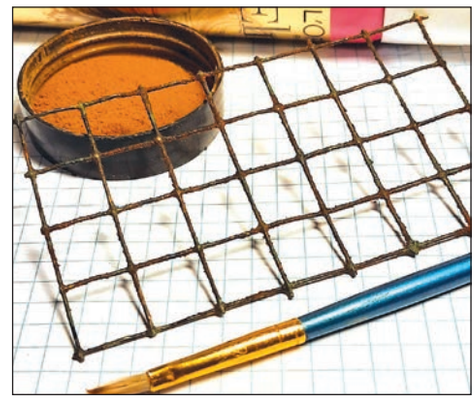
Step 2. Cut the eye drop seal caps. You want a piece that's approximately 1.5 x 2cm. It's just a mould for your seed pockets so if you have anything else laying around that fits, then use it!

Step 3. Paint the welded wire. Start with an even application of black and let dry.



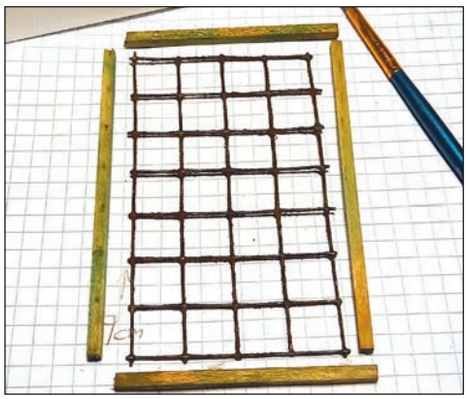
Step 4. Tap the front and back of the wire with small bits of green, brown, amber and gold paint. Make sure your brush isn't too wet. Just go with the flow and age to your liking.

Step 5. When the paint is half dry, start the next step.



Step 6. For a lovely rusty finish, sprinkle cinnamon powder over the half dried paint. Do this on both sides. Let dry.

Step 7. Gently brush off loose powder and fixate the rest with hairspray on both sides of the wire. The cheaper the hairspray, the better it sticks! Let dry.



Step 8. Brush a little ageing water on the balsa sticks. This will give the wood a lovely worn look. Let dry.

Step 9. Glue the balsa sticks onto the edges of welded wire.

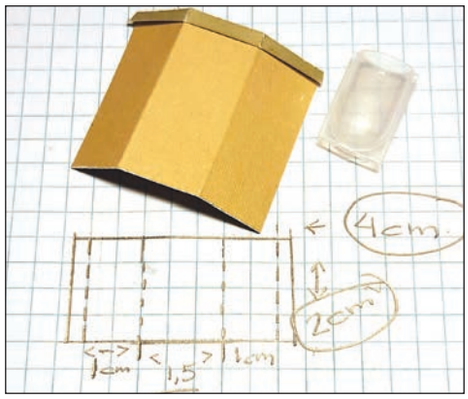
Step 10. Take your watercolours and finish in the tones you like. I used greens, greys and ambers.



Step 11. Take your metal needles. Bend them into hooks.

Step 12. Cut of the needle head. Don't throw them away, they make great miniature nail heads

Step 13. Take your paper and cut it in 6 pieces of 4.5 x 2cm. I chose a neutral linen paper to give the bags a hessian look and feel.



Step 14. Fold the top (0.5cm) and glue to the front.



Step 15. Fold the paper around the mould and glue together at the back. Make sure you get that pocket shape.

Step 16. Put some glue at the bottom and press the two halves together using pliers. This gives a great sealed finish.

Step 17. Punch a little hole at the back of the pockets and put in the hooks.



Step 18. Print the labels of your choice. I Googled 'Herb labels', downloaded the ones I liked and adjusted the images to size.





Step 19. Print, cut and glue them onto your mini herb pockets.

Step 20. Finish the pockets with the plants you like. I used 3D glue to fill the pockets and dried coffee grounds for soil.

Step 21. Hang them on the wire and attach the unit to your miniature wall!

Tea chest house loved by four generations

Christine's unusual war-time house has survived over the years as a family heirloom that has brought joy to her children and her grandchildren



BY SANDRA HARDING

I have written about many houses over the years – from the sublime to the ridiculous as the saying goes – and I have loved them all.

They have ranged from fabulous grand and famous houses to the tiniest little 144th scale, but this is a first – again, a house made out of a tea chest. Now, those of you not of a mature age won't know what on earth I am talking about; surely tea comes in little bags and packets I hear you cry! Yes, but I am talking about the old days, the ones that your grandparents keep on about, when loose tea was shipped in chests made of thin wood.

Christine Horne was just a little girl when her parents bought her a second hand doll's house, and it was well played with, despite not having furniture. At that time, during and after the Second World War, toys were few and far between so Christine had to make her own.

Luckily match boxes (another oldie) were widely available as so many people smoked during that time. Christine used them to create furniture, including chests of drawers, and little beds and shelves. Books of wallpaper swatches were used to make wallpaper, carpets and curtains, and anything that she could use, she did.

Now and again, Christine's mother would buy her a piece of furniture from a local shop which was struggling to keep open. The shop never had very much in it, but Christine feels that her mother felt sorry for the shopkeeper, and bought from him, rather than another toyshop. Christine treasures those pieces, and they are still in the house. Over the years it has undergone several transformations including the addition of leaded lights and little window boxes.

To explain more about the house's origin, which is the reason for my fascination after all. Loose tea came in large wooden crates or boxes, and the original house builder used one of these to build the structure, which measures 19'' long, 20'' high, and 18'' wide. I am told that is the size and shape of the original tea chest, which doesn't include the roof of course, which measures 8''.



He added sliding doors at the back and a beautiful frontage, with a lovely bay window and latched front door. It looks like a typical suburban house from the 1930s-40s, and the maker obviously cared very much for the recipient. This is not a show home, and certainly does look like a well loved piece of history. It stands on a little stool that was given to Christine by her mother-in-law.

Christine really loves the house and is delighted that her children and her grandchildren have all had the same pleasure playing with it, especially her youngest granddaughter Charlotte who is ten-years-old. Christine has added further pieces of furniture for the latest generation, and she admits to playing with it, with Charlotte, just as she did as a child.

It has been played with by four generations and it will be passed down the family as an heirloom. Isn't that just a perfect example of an emotional attachment to a little treasure?



















A little lace and sewin

One Dutch miniaturist has found a sanctuary in her miniature world

BY DEB WEISSLER

Miniaturist Marike Noordhoek-Struijs loves her miniature world and never imagined that this hobby, 'this addiction' as she calls it, would give her so much pleasure. She calls it her safe haven, a sanctuary where she has things that are important and precious to her and where she is free to create whatever comes to mind.

''Throughout my doll's house journey, especially on Instagram, I got to know so many people with the same passion for miniatures,'' Marike enthuses. ''I've made friends all over the world. To see the creations made by all my doll's house friends is something I enjoy seeing every day. It has enriched my life.''

For a half decade Marike has immersed herself in a beautiful world





Above: *The front facade of the shop.*
Below: *Every corner of the shop is filled with beautiful miniature lace and floral accents.*



ng shop

filled with miniature collecting and decorating. Less a DIY builder and more an interior designer and decorator, she prefers buying beautiful pieces from those who are experts in the world of fine craftsmanship.

It all began in 2014 when she discovered some doll's house furniture that belonged to her late mother. The vintage pieces in 1/16 scale dated from the 1930s and Marike, who







Above: *A little table full of treasures.*
Below left: *The doll above was made by Debbie Dixon-Paver.*

couldn't recall having seen them before, was intrigued. Not long after, she bought her first doll's house in twelfth scale. It was the start of a grand obsession and like many of us she couldn't stop at just one!

"When I buy a new doll's house I almost immediately know how I want to decorate and furnish it. Although I get inspirations from the photos of other miniaturists on Instagram, over the years I have developed my own style. Being retired, I can devote as much time as I want to on my hobby."

Marike's latest project is Dolls House Emporium's "Magpie's" kit which she has turned into a lace and sewing shop with living quarters upstairs. With six generous size rooms, this two storey structure offers a variety of possibilities, including a separate addition off to one side if desired. Marike always dreamed of having a sewing shop when her attention was drawn to an Etsy storefront featuring beautiful lace. She said: "I ordered some things and my lace and sewing shop was born."

Although Marike painted much of the furniture herself, most of the items on display were bought. Content to collect and decorate, she utilised her skills in interior design as she combined pieces from all over the world.

"The gorgeous Edwardian Lady, Catherine, was made by Debbie





Dixon-Paver; the mannequin with the pink dress was made by Gabi Heine, as well as the boxes with garments. The vintage-style perfume and lace counter, the lace dresser, the shabby chic fabric and lace cabinet dresser, the vintage-style shop counter and shabby-chic chair are all made by Gina Conley.

''The wall decoration and some of the lovely miniatures came from Antonella Nardi. Lots of the beautiful sewing items were made by Sigrid Kursirek and the elegant round couch made by Eileen Carr I found in England.''

The result is a warm, inviting and elegant boutique tastefully arranged and filled with everything a sewing enthusiast could desire. Her pieces are artfully and realistically displayed so that there's plenty of stock to browse through but floor space enough for mini patrons to walk around.

Marike has now turned her attention to finishing the apartment above the shop. The entire project has taken her almost a year. She looks back on that time a bit wistfully. ''Now that it's almost finished, I feel a little bit sad, because it occupied my mind the entire year. The invitation to feature my shop in the magazine is a dream come true. It's one of my most treasured projects and I'm very grateful and happy that so many people will have a chance to see it.''



Above: ***A little table full of treasures.***
Below left: ***This dresser is filled to the brim with all sorts of lace.***

In addition to doll's houses, Marike enjoys decorating room boxes and glass domes. In 2017 she attended a workshop given in the Netherlands by Dana Burton, where attendees created a Steampunk Lady. Marike made a small vignette inside a glass dome to house her. Marike has even turned an old radio interior into a living room.

Her biggest challenge is lighting, but fortunately her supportive husband steps in to assist. When she threw the lighting switch for the very first time and saw her dream of a sewing shop come to life, made all the effort worthwhile. Now that her doll's house room is filling up fast, Marike says she is going to concentrate on room boxes and domes to conserve space for even more projects.

Hands up who wants to make a mini doll



Over the next few issues you can learn how to sculpt your very own twelfth scale doll along with miniature doll artist, Kim McCool. Put your hand up to give it a go.

BY KIM MCCOOL

Please join me in these next few issues as I take you through the process of sculpting your very own twelfth scale doll.

We will take it slowly, one step at a time. If this sounds intimidating, don't worry. I'll keep these instructions as simple as possible and guide you though one part at a time in each issue, culminating with a complete doll.

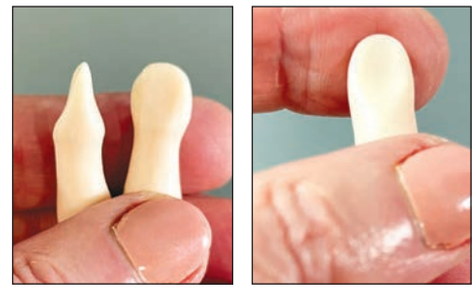
We'll start with the hands. Please note: In this tutorial, I alternate working with each hand so the clay doesn't get too soft. If the clay gets too soft, take a break and come back to it in 5 to 10 minutes. Overworked clay is very difficult to manipulate. Remember, "If you can dream it, you can do it!" Now let's go!

You will need

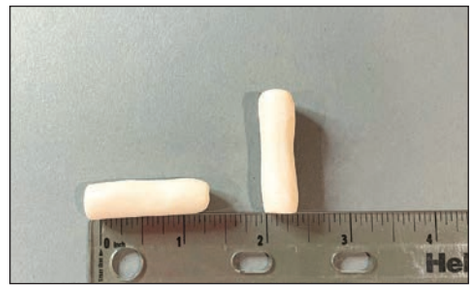
- Polymer clay - flesh coloured
- Cutting knife
- Small knitting needle (size 2 or 3)
- Darning Needle
- Glass Baking dish
- Paper towels
- Optional - wooden cuticle stick, chop stock or wooden skewer



Step 1. Soften a 1" x 1" piece of polymer clay by kneading it in your hands until it's pliable and doesn't crack when you roll it. Roll into a ball.



Step 3. Press one end of each coil into a mitten shape. The second photo gives you an idea of how big the mitten should be.



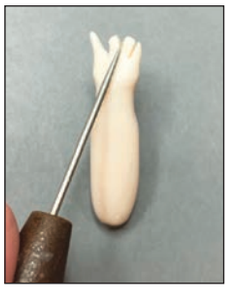
Step 2. Using your knife, cut the ball in half, then roll each half into two coils. They should measure 1-1/4" long and 1/4" in diameter.



Step 4. Using your thumb and index finger, roll the clay to shape the wrist.

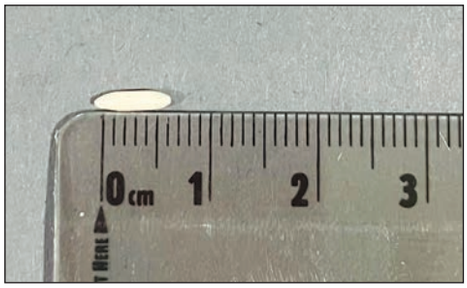


Step 5. Using your knife, start in the middle of the mitten, cut the mitten into four equal parts for the fingers.





Step 6. Roll each finger into shape with either the darning needle or your fingers,This is how the fingers should look after shaping. Using your own hands as a reference, notice the length of each finger and shape the clay accordingly.



Step 7. To make the thumb, roll a tiny piece of clay into a coil about 4-5mm long.



Step 8. Flatten one end of the coil and place it where the pad of the thumb would be. Smooth the end of the clay that's on the thumb pad into the palm.





Step 9. If you turn the hand over after you've smoothed the clay into the palm of the hand, you'll see there is a gap between the base of the thumb and the back of the hand. To remedy that, roll a tiny piece of clay into a ball.



Step 10. Flatten this piece of clay and place on the back of the hand at the base of the thumb and blend the seams together.



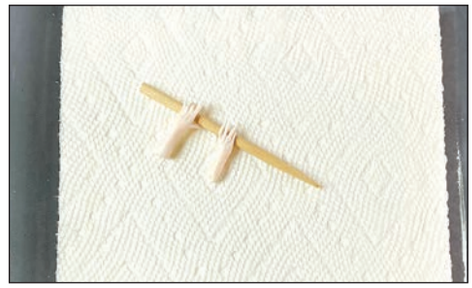
Step 11: Next, take your double pointed knitting needle and roll it into the palm of the hand and shape. Gently move the clay from the palm onto the pad of the thumb.



Step 12. Using your darning needle and pressing gently, pull the needle toward the wrist to simulate the bones of the hand. You can also use the tip of the need to make indentations for the fingernails, if you so desire.



Step 13. Very carefully position the fingers into the pose you'd like. Take into consideration if your doll will be holding something, pointing, casually standing, etc.



Step 14. Line the bottom of your glass baking dish with a paper towel. I use half of a wooden cuticle stick to place the fingers on to help support them as they bake. You can also use a small piece of a paper towel. If you don't have some sort of support for the fingers, they could slump while baking.

Step 15: Bake at the temperature and length of time as indicated by the clay manufacturer you may be using. The polymer clay I like to use calls for 265 degrees for 30 minutes.

Congratulations! You've done it! I hope you've enjoyed this tutorial. I've made many, many, MANY sets of hands over the years. Before you place your hands in the oven, if you don't like them, just scrunch them up into a ball and start over. Clay is very forgiving. Keep in mind, sculpting takes practice and time. Believe me, if I can do this, YOU can do this! Until next time remember, ''If you can dream it, you can do it.''

● See more of my work at KimMcCoolArt.weebly.com.



Get ready for the beach!

Here are some fun tips

- Use play sand for your beach scene; it is finer than coastal sand and probably cleaner

- Add detail to your sand with tiny seashells that you can buy from souvenir shops, beads show and craft stores. Tiny stones and pebbles from the beach are also useful, as in driftwood from a garden.

- Visit souvenir shops, you can often find items that can be adapted for our project.

- When making towels, stitch fine lines of coloured thread for borders or mark them with felt tip pens for decoration.

- Create rock pools using Scenic Water and small stones imbedded in play sand.

- Make sand castles by moulding sand and glue into shape.

Make a camellia for the front of your house

Jodi tries her hand at making climbing stems by twisting wire and coating it with latex. You need to add a lot of blooms but the effect is worthwhile

BY JODI HIPPLER

I was able to figure out how to make an armature out of metal wire for the miniature camellia tree I wanted.

The wire that I purchased online came in a set of varying gauges. This was because I really wasn't sure until I actually was able to play with it how big a diameter I should use and how long I should make it.

Step 1. I settled on a mixture of three wire strands that were 1mm, 1.5mm and 2mm. I made each length 36'', essentially doubling the length of the 18'' area I needed the shrub to cover.

Step 2. Then, following a Luke Towan's instruction video, I folded the length in half leaving a twist at the middle for roots. (I had to size my measurements up from Luke's, naturally, because I am not working in HO train scale.)

You will need

- Wire strands that were 1mm, 1.5mm and 2mm wire
- Wire cutters
- Miniature pot
- Hot glue
- Woodland Scenics Latex Rubber
- Paint brush
- Acrylic paint: Raw Sienna Satin glazing medium
- Ultra Matte Mod Podge
- Miniature flowers



Step 3. To keep the roots in place, I positioned them in the pot and then added layer after layer of hot glue until it was completely affixed and stable. It really made a nice work stand!



Step 4. I decided to try using Woodland Scenics Latex Rubber to coat the wire tree armature, because it remains flexible once dry and painted.



I had a lot of areas of the house I wanted to train the tree against, so having some flexibility was crucial. I found the latex rubber as easy as applying thick paint and the odour not too bad. I applied three good coats and let them dry thoroughly in between. It dries semi-opaque and semi-clear with just a slight yellow tone.



Step 5. Applying paint to the dried latex rubber was much easier than I expected and it adhered well. I used everyday acrylic craft paint to give an undertone in a colour that was called Honeycomb.

Step 6. Then, I applied a few washes of Raw Sienna so that it settled into the cracks and gave nice definition. I added a couple coats of the Raw Sienna floated in satin glazing medium for a little depth, then sealed the entire tree in Ultra Matte Mod Podge. I wanted the sealer to remain flexible, as well.

Step 7. I put the tree back in place and bent it to shape again before beginning to apply the camellia flowers.





Step 8. To apply them to the shrub, I wrapped the wire ends around the tree so that I could later adjust them if and as needed.

Step 9. Out of the one-hundred-forty-four stems, I reserved nine to make up a vase for inside. I also saved five to place into a miniature picking basket.

Step 10. After I felt the shrub was sufficiently covered, I still had fourteen left. So how many camellias does it take to cover a climbing shrub? Exactly one-hundred and sixteen!

And how many leaves did it take? Let's just say that I have four of the eleven sheets left!

Step 11. Once the leaves and blooms were on, I filled the pot with some white glue and 'dirt', then fitted the tree in place.

I am not sure what season my garden is in, or when it is supposed to bloom, but in my make believe world, it makes perfect sense. And the latex rubber was definitely the way to go! My branches bent and conformed with ease and with no sign of stress. Never be afraid to try new materials and products!



we love them

MINIS THAT HAVE CAUGHT OUR EYE THIS MONTH



Perfect pagoda from CJ Miniatures
Email: jcm.gabbey47@btinternet.com



Feed the birds with Helles Miniatures
www.facebook.com/h.k.jerndal



Gorgeous mini trunks from Cat's Paw
Email: melembo@sent.net

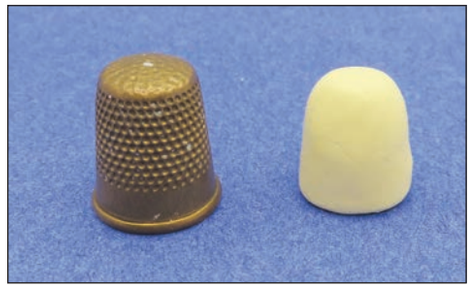
Beautiful beehive cake will make a scene hum

This beehive cake, made using a thimble as a mould, is easy to make if you follow the steps and the result will make you buzz with pride

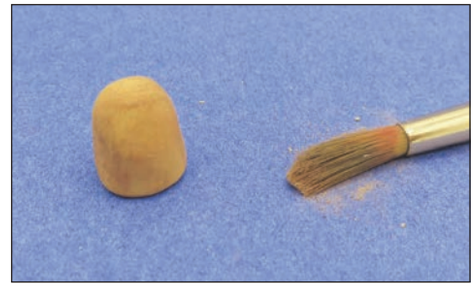
BY SADIE BROWN

Make a sweet mini treat for your spring or summer party scene! Your mini guest will 'bee' thrilled!

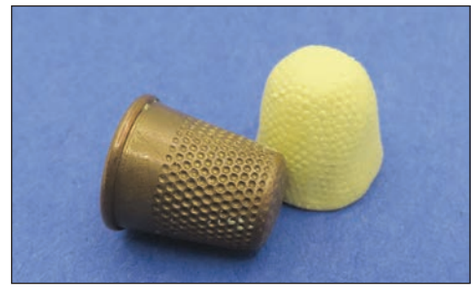
Step 1. Mix two parts white polymer clay with one part translucent. Add in some yellow clay and grated Golden Ochre pastel to create a shade resembling a golden sponge cake.



Step 2. Fill the inside of a thimble with the clay mixture, using it as a mould to create the basic beehive shape. Remove the clay and mould it into the final beehive shape.



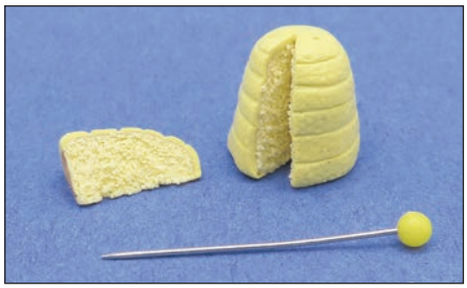
Step 3. Mix grated Golden Ochre, Dark Cadmium Orange and brown pastel to create a colour resembling the golden brown of a freshly baked cake. Brush liberally over the clay.



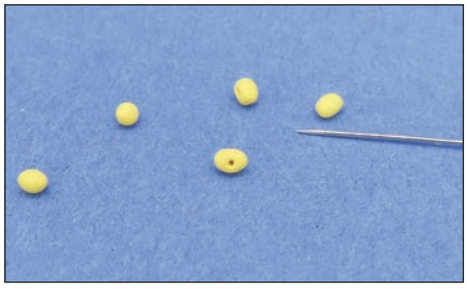
Step 4. Mix white and yellow clay to create Lemon Yellow. Roll out the mixed clay to around 1mm in thickness and carefully cover the cake as if you were icing it. If the outside of your thimble is textured, use it to add a light 'honeycomb' effect to the clay.

You will need

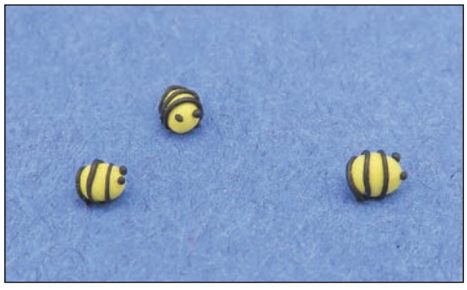
- Polymer clay - white, translucent, yellow, black, Spring Green
- Pastels - Golden Ochre, Dark Orange Cadmium, brown
- Small paintbrush
- Needle tool or sewing pin
- Thimble
- Roller
- Knife
- Sculpey Bake & Bond
- Super glue
- Old twelfth scale bamboo basket



Step 5. Use a needle tool or sewing pin to score five roughly equidistant lines around the cake, creating that final beehive effect. Put the clay into the freezer to harden up for a few minutes before removing and cutting a single slice from the cake. Again, using the needle tool, add texture to both the inside of the cake and the slice. Make three small holes in the top of the cake. Bake and allow to cool thoroughly.



Step 6. To make the bees themselves, begin by rolling six tiny balls of bright yellow clay, three roughly 3mm in diameter and three slightly smaller. Make a tiny hole in the base of the three larger 'bees' with a needle tool.



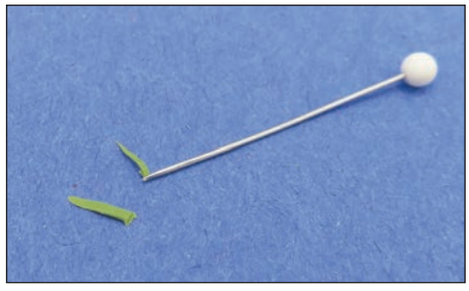
Step 7. Roll some very thin 'ropes' of black clay, as thin as you can manage and cut two lengths for the smaller bees and three for the larger bees, wrapping them around the yellow clay to form stripes.

Roll twelve very tiny balls of black clay for the eyes and use a little Sculpey Bake & Bond or similar to adhere two to the front of each bee.





Step 8. Flatten two tiny balls of white clay with a fingernail, lifting them from your work surface with a needle tool or sewing pin, before attaching to the top of one of the bees with Bake & Bond to create the wings. Repeat for each bee.



Step 9. Take some green clay, a nice Spring Green shade, and roll into tiny ropes with a pointed end. Flatten with a fingernail, cutting a straight edge at the base to create simple long grass stems.



Step 10. Use Bake & Bond to stick the grass stems to either side of the gap in the cake and also to attach the three smaller bees. Stick two of these to the top of the cake and one to the top of the grass stems. Return the cake to the oven along with the three larger bees. Allow the cake to cool thoroughly.



Step 11. Cut three short sticks taken from an old twelfth scale bamboo basket and stick the bees with the holes in the bases into one end of the bamboo stems with super glue. Finally, glue the other end of the sticks into the holes made in the top of the cake.

All finished! Display your cake in your mini scene.

Jeanette built a fine manor the hard way

This Georgian Manor, filled with Victorian furnishings, was a long time in the planning as Jeanette collected pieces years before buying what was her first house

BY ALICE MONROE



Calling a reader to ask to visit their home for a feature can provoke a mixture of reactions. Most are pleased to hear from us, some get all excited, but in the case of Jeanette Streek she thought we were having a laugh. Or rather, she thought her husband was. So when we turned up on her doorstep armed with tripod, lenses and various lights, Jeanette was quite surprised.

''I thought it was my husband doing a gotcha,'' Jeanette explained. ''He has played tricks on me like this before and I had been wracking my brains trying to think whose voice it was on the phone and who he had got to help him.''

This time, he was an innocent man. We had featured Jeanette's house in Small Accomplishments many years ago and felt it deserved greater inspection.

Jeanette waited two years to get her house. She'd been putting it off due to lack of space – a common complaint amongst miniaturists. But that didn't stop her collecting all sorts of furnishings for the home she knew she'd have one day. Every trip out or family holiday was subject to a quick flick through the Yellow Pages for local doll's house shops. Items came from far and wide, including New York where she picked up a lovely chest of drawers and some framed pictures.

''Oh, the anticipation of waiting for the postman to bring any mail order goodies,'' said Jeanette.

Then one day she came across a Honeychurch kit, in a half price sale and that was it. Jeanette hurried home with her purchase and hoped that her father-in-law would take the job on. He wasn't keen. When batting the eyelashes doesn't work there's only one solution. Jeanette took a deep breath, gazed at the various bits of wood in the box and rolled up her sleeves. She spent so many hours in the garage that her family thought she'd moved out.

''I learnt the hard way and wasted feet of skirting boards and dado rail trying to match the mitred corners,'' she admitted.

''The worst part was in building the stairs and banisters. For some reason the glue wouldn't stick and I had to redo it about three times.''

Jeanette's new-found confidence in her talents helped her tackle further alterations, such as adding the railings and balcony and making minor alterations to the interior. The conservatory was a later addition, following an exhibition. Although 'The Manor' is Georgian, the interior furnishings are










THE MANOR













mainly Victorian. While Jeanette had been collecting furnishings she had naturally gone for the pieces she liked, most of which were Victorian and readily available.

With the matter of construction out the way, there was plenty of time for the fun part. With six rooms and three landings to play with she set about working on the room plans, finding homes for all her lovely things and deciding what went where.

Ironically Jeanette wasn't going to put any occupants into such a large house, until she met his lordship. He was waiting for her at a fair and is instantly recognisable as the work of Carole Bull from Bags of Character. Then she found him a wife, her ladyship, who looks like she is capable of some serious nagging.





The study is his lordship's and therefore the one masculine room in the house. It is also a bit untidy and full of dusty old books. Jeanette built the whole room based around him and filled it with perfect clues to his interests and personality. Paintings of ships and fish on the walls, a glass of port, carafe of wine, a copy of the Financial Times, but most curious of all, a pair of bright red tasselled slippers beside the fire. He obviously spends a lot of time in there.

''It's somewhere to hide from her ladyship,'' admitted Jeanette.

Hard at work in the kitchen is one very tired cook preparing for yet another dinner party. Food is one of those things that looks so appealing in miniature, and is also one of the easiest things to find. Between visits to shows, orders by mail, impulse buys and presents, it's no wonder this house is filled with mouth-watering delights.



The dining room table, which Jeanette made larger to accommodate all her china, has already been laid in preparation for the evening feast. But before dinner, there's just time for afternoon tea in the parlour where a fantastic spread of naughties awaits. This must be one of the most well fed families around.

''My family and friends love the house but I get very protective about it when people try to pick things up'' admitted Jeanette and added, ''I've introduced some friends to the hobby and now they spend all their time and









Left and below left: *The black and white hat and shoes in the main bedroom are two of Jeanette's favourite items, bought in Covent Garden. She made the bedspread and curtains around the four-poster bed herself, which took about three hours. The wedding dress came with a mannequin but hangs on the wall to allow for more space.*

money on their houses too.''

Little do they know how addictive this hobby is. Since when did an enthusiastic miniaturist take on one project and stop there? Jeanette has already completed her second project, a wonderful 1950's shop. Like 'The Manor,' it is a lovely piece of work and merits a feature in a future edition of DHW, subject, that is, to gotchas.

THE CUTOUTS PAGE 2



















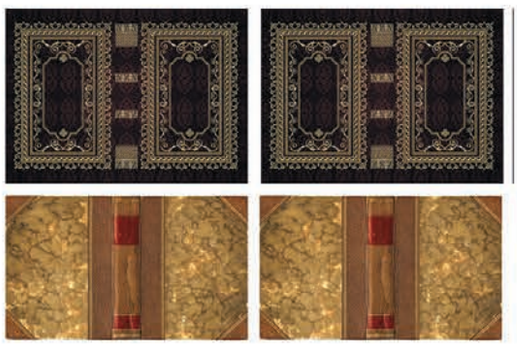
































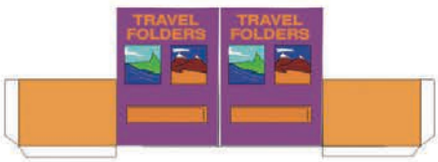


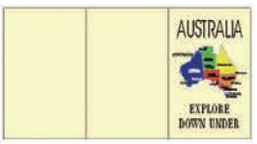




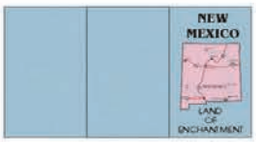


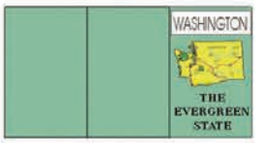




















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Don’t miss **dollshouse.live**

The team at Dolls House World weren’t sitting idly by during lockdown. As well as producing the magazine we also came up with an online newsletter to serve the mini community.

But the good news is that **Dollshouse.live** has been such an amazing success that we’ve decided we have to keep it running.

Dollshouse.live is full of fascinating features, projects and videos, and all totally free — little wonder the site has become incredibly popular with miniaturists in the UK and around the world.



The newsletter began as a way of keeping miniaturists in touch with the hobby during lockdown, and also letting people know how makers and others were coping with isolation.

But it has grown incredibly. Now our mini mad team add new features every week. We are sharing articles from the magazine, but are bringing you a wealth of exciting new content and up-to-the minute news on shows and makers.

So don’t miss out. Go to **www.dollshouse.live** on your computer or phone now to read the site everyone’s talking about.

Turn to terracotta to add outdoor interest

We've put together a collection of mini jugs, jars and pots to give you some idea of how to add the warmth of terracotta to your scenes

BY HELEN FIELDING



Terracotta is one of the oldest materials used for containers, which remains of great value in gardens today. The word terracotta means 'fired earth'. Pots are made of this particular kind of clay are shaped and baked, usually to a lower temperature than bricks, to achieve that gorgeous soft red colour.

Handmade pots have a soft, porous texture, which mellows with the years. They also tend to have variations, small cracks and other imperfections. They are quite different from machine made pots, which may be equally useful but have a uniform, leathery, texture. Handmade pots are much less prone to frost damage, almost to the extent of being frost proof if they aren't allowed to become water logged. Fortunately, this is not a matter we have to deal with in miniatures.

In Mediterranean countries, the manufacture of terracotta pots has continued since ancient times, with many illustrations found in wall paintings of Egyptian and Roman gardens, and some of these older shapes are still available. These pots are also linked with the classical gardens found throughout Tuscany.

Tuscany remains a great centre of terracotta manufacture and the festoon and swag patterns on classical pots derive from the garlands of vine leaves that were used to decorate gardens at festival times.

Other pots come from Spain, Greece and Portugal, each having their own distinctive shape, many designed for a particular purpose. This includes storing food, water, wine and olive oil, and even use as a cooking pot.

Even in the miniature world pots are made to the same standards and designs as the full-size ones, so you have a wide choice for your garden or patio. Shown here are just a few of the terracotta pots we have found.

There are hundreds of different shapes and sizes of terracotta pots and jugs that you can use in the house or garden. They make ideal displays on dressers or hanging in some dark corner of your patio.

Top left: *Strawberry planter - a great way to grow strawberries on the patio. It also helps to keep the slugs away from the plants.*
Top right: *Flower pots - varying sizes and shapes, perfect for individual plants.*
Above left: *Botijo (water jug). Typical Tuscan jug made of terracotta. Terracotta allows the water to maintain a fresh, cool temperature.*
Above right: *Food jars - pork and meats are salted and kept in jars for many weeks.*







Above left: *Three wine/olive oil jars - allows the wine to breathe at the same time as keeping it cool.*
Above right: *Two cooking ovens - these are widely used around the Mediterranean area.*
Left: *Flower pots - varying sizes and shapes, perfect for individual plants*

Watering can is ideal for a shed or garden

A colourful watering can will add interest to many a garden or shed scene. Kris shows how to make one out of card step-by-step

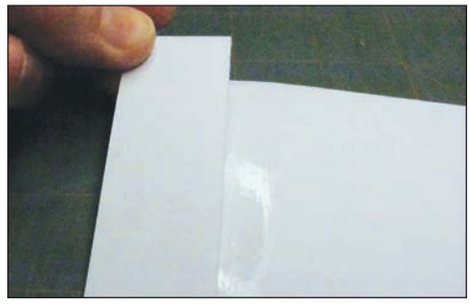
BY KRIS COMPAS



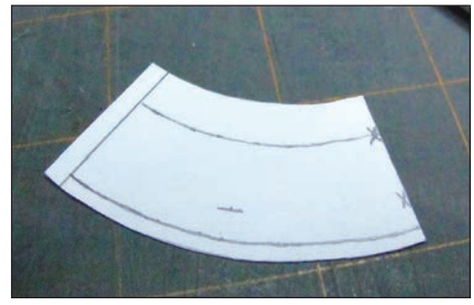
This month I have a watering can to make from card stock. I am trying out a new thing this time, including centimetres; these are estimates as this project doesn't really need to be exact. I hope this helps out a bit.

I bought the watering can, pictured top right, from Home Depot. It was marked down so I couldn't resist. I love the shape. The miniature version will be a great addition to the miniature gardens and potting sheds that are being planned.

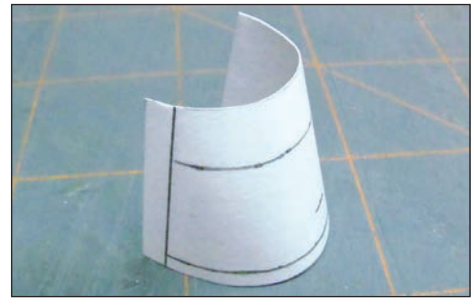
Step 1. Cut about a 2'' (5cm) length of the button/carpet thread. Apply a dab of Elmer's to your finger and run the thread through the glue. This will stiffen the thread. Set aside for later.



Step 2. Cut a piece of card stock about 1'' x 3'' (2.5cm x 7.5cm) and use Elmer's to glue this piece to another piece of card stock. Press well, smooth it out and set this aside for later. We need this double layer of card stock for the handle.



Step 3. Trace the pattern out on card stock. Cut the body out. When cutting, cut on the line, don't leave any line on the card stock pattern piece.

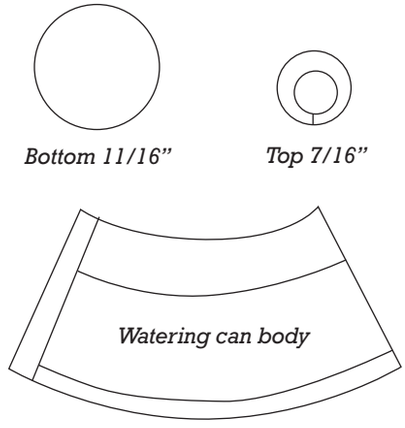


Step 4. To help glue this piece together we need to curve it first. Place the pattern piece on the edge of your table, cover the pattern with the palm of your hand and pull the pattern through. It will curve.

You will need

- Card stock
- Button/carpet thread
- Large ball stylus tool
- 1/4'' hole punch
- Circle template
- Cutting knife
- Toothpick
- Craft foam
- Cotton buds
- Elmer's white or yellow glue
- Tacky glue
- Metal ruler
- Alligator clips

Pattern





Step 5. Glue the body together, overlapping to the line. Use alligator clips to hold the body together if you have them. Let this dry.

Spout option 1

Step 6. We have two options for the spout. One has a curve in it, that's the one we use the cotton buds for. These things have a rolled paper handle with cotton at each end. I am sure they are universal, just not called cotton buds.

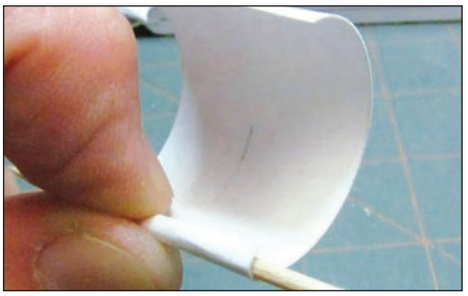
Step 7. The other spout is straight and we will roll card stock to make it.

Step 8. This is the straight card stock spout. Cut a strip of card about 1-1/8" wide; we will trim to size later.



Step 9. Run this strip over the edge of your table to get a tight curve started.

Step 10. Run the card stock over the table edge a couple of times to get a tight curve.

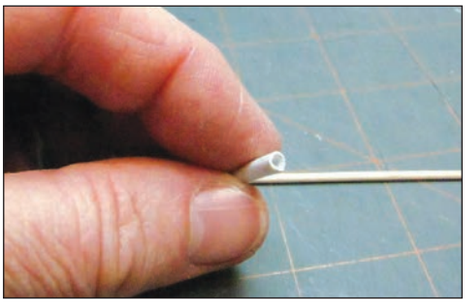


Step 11. Start wrapping the card stock around a toothpick, then roll tightly.

Step 12. Now, unroll a bit and apply glue to the card stock, roll up the card stock again. I wouldn't roll up more than twice around the toothpick. Be careful not to get any glue onto the toothpick. Trim the card stock close to the edge of the glue.



Step 13. Give the whole thing a good roll back and forth on your work table.





Step 14. Slip off the tube. Cut a sharp angle on one end using your scissors. You can hold it up to the body of the watering can to get the angle you want.

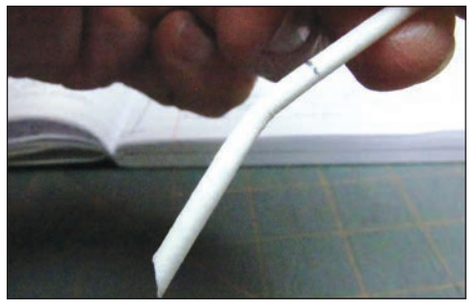
Step 15. Now, cut the top angle to the length you want your spout to be.

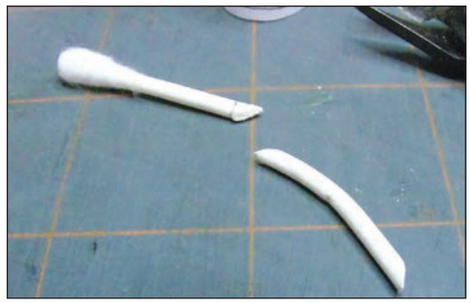
Spout option 2

Step 16. The next type of spout uses cotton buds. So get them handy.

Step 17. Use your knife, scissors or wire cutters to cut one end off at a sharp angle. Again, you can hold this up to the watering can body to judge the angle.

Step 18. Measure 1-1/8" (28mm) from that cut and make a mark on the handle of the cotton bud.

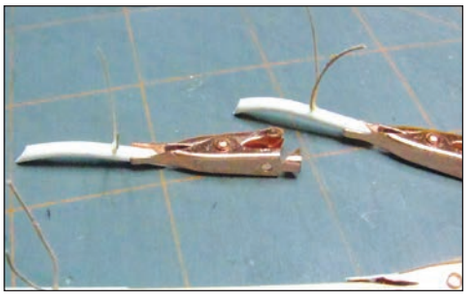




Step 19. Bend the handle a bit between your forefinger and thumb. Now cut at the mark you made.

Step 20. Remember the little bit of button/carpet thread you stiffened with glue? We are going to use it now. Fold the thread in half and cut at the halfway mark. Save one piece for later use.



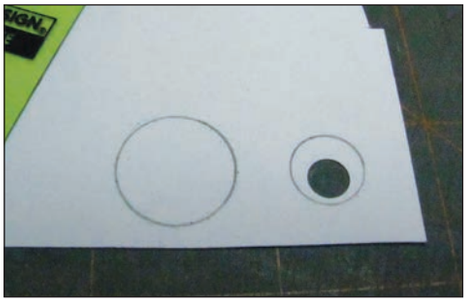


Step 21. Take the extra piece and fold it in half. Use Elmer's to glue the fold to the spout about 3/8'' (9mm) from the bottom of the spout, somewhere in that area. Be sure to glue the thread on the side of the spout that will face the body.

Watering can

Step 22. Punch a 1/4'' hole into the corner of your card stock.

Step 23. Use a circle template to draw a 7/16'' circle around the hole you just punched. Offset the circle so that the hole is not centred.

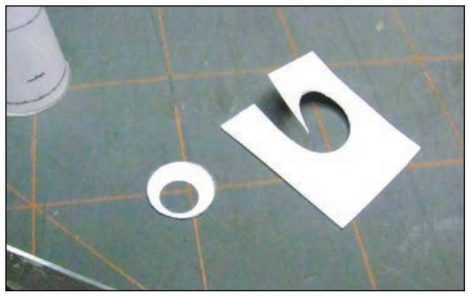


Step 24. Now draw a 11/16'' circle. Or you can use the patterns that I provided shown above.

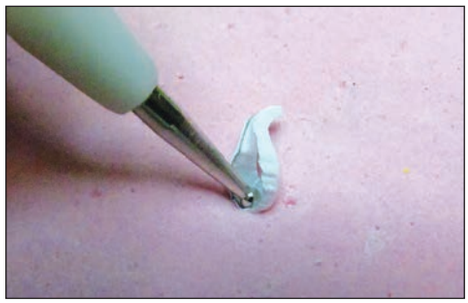
Step 25. Cut out the large circle. Remove the clips from the dry watering can body.



Step 26. Apply Elmer's to the bottom of the body and set it onto the circle. Let this dry. You may have to trim, but don't do that until the bottom is dry.



Step 27. Cut out the circle with the offset hole in it.



Step 28. Lay the circle onto the craft foam or something similar. Use a ball stylus tool to shape the large portion of the circle.



Step 29. Rub the stylus tool over the card to create a rounded shape. Press hard, this is the top and we want it to have a rounded shape. The seam on the body is the 'centre back'.

Step 30. Glue the top onto the body by gluing the large rounded part first, opposite the centre back. There will be a little extra to trim at the centre back. I tried many sizes of circles, trying to avoid the trimming, but I couldn't get it.



Step 31. Cut the little extra off or just cut the circle open and overlap the extra. Continue to glue the top onto the top of the body.

Step 32. Get the piece of double layer of card stock that you set aside earlier. Cut a strip 3/32'' wide.



Step 33. Using tacky or Elmer's glue a length of button/carpet thread down the centre. Set aside, this is the handle.



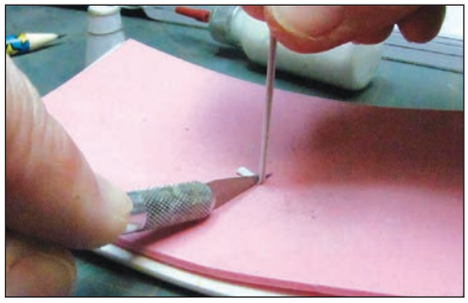
Step 34. Use tacky or Elmer's glue to thread around the bottom seam. Glue the thread around the body on the lines.

Step 35. Run the card stock handle through your fingers to help make the paper curve.



Step 36. With a sharp blade in your knife, cut a small horizontal slot in the body at the bottom 'X' wide enough for the handle to go through. Wiggle the blade a little to open the slot a bit.

Step 37. Cut the length of the handle to 2-1/8'' (54mm).



Step 38. Bend 1/4'' (7mm) at one end of the handle. Bend 1/8'' (3mm) at the other end of the handle.



Step 39. When you bent the 1/8'' end of the handle the card stock probably came apart. We are going to take advantage of this. Cut off the bottom layer of the card stock to the 1/8'' crease. If this doesn't come apart, sand it thinner.

Step 40. Run the handle through your fingers to help make the curve.



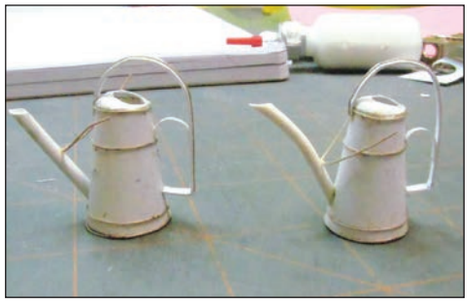
Step 41. Apply glue into the bottom slot and insert the bottom of the handle in, just into the body of the watering can.



Step 42. Apply glue to the centre front at the top seam and bend the handle over and glue the tip to the top seam.



Step 43. Cut a single layer of card stock the same width as the handle, 1/2'' (14mm) long. Apply glue to the top 'X' on the centre back seam, above the thread. Glue one end of the 1/2'' long piece to the body. Gently bend the piece and glue the other end to the handle.



Step 44. Glue the bottom of the spout to the line on the centre front of the watering can. Let dry.



Step 45. When the spout is dry, really dry, trim the thread and glue the ends of the thread to the body of the watering can.



Step 46. I put my cans on toothpicks to paint them. I use the sticky wax that miniature sites sell to stick accessories to miniature furniture. I scrape out a ball the size of a pea and stick it on a toothpick. This works well to paint small projects.

Step 47. I recommend using a thick paint for the first coat. I like using Delta's Perm Enamel, and I use white as a primer. This covers all of the little bumps and covers the thread like I want it to, so it doesn't look like I use acrylic craft paint to finish them. Then I apply a coat of Perm Enamel Gloss Glaze for shine, 2 coats.

Step 48. Of course you can paint them in metal coloured paints, age them, ding them up a bit. All sorts of effects can be used to make them your own.

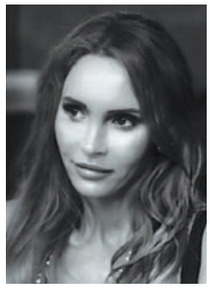


Gosia's fabulous food is fit for a prince



Gosia's love of miniatures was sparked in modest surroundings using cardboard and fabric scraps to create tiny things. Now her stunning food is sought after by collectors

BY JOAN MCKENZIE



Gosia Suchodolska was born in communist Poland in 1975, with limited access to various goods, including toys. Both of her parents were teachers who lived modestly, but she did have a few dolls, teddy bears and some building blocks. Compared to what children have today it was next to nothing.

Even at that time she observed that such lack of ready-made toys may have been a blessing in disguise. If you truly desired to own something, you simply had to create it. Not just invent it – but also figure out how to make it with the tools and materials that were available.

This is how her love for miniatures was born. There was only one toy shop in her area. Gosia and her sisters loved standing in front of the shop window and staring at the treasures inside. For some reason, they never dared to ask their parents for toys, except for at Christmas time. However, even then, her parents believed it was better for their children to receive more practical things, like clothing or books. Toys became objects of their dreams.

One year Gosia received a special gift. Her aunt had just returned from Czechoslovakia and had brought her a white and orange set of miniature kitchen furniture that was considered to be a modern style for the late 1970s, with doors that opened, cupboards full of plates, and drawers equipped with plastic cutlery. Remembering this gift, she can still envision the details of that furniture, including the feel of smooth plastic in her fingers.

Immediately, she and her sisters cleared a bookshelf and arranged a tiny room for this gift to be displayed. This was it! During the moments that followed she looked at the arrangement and knew that she needed a carpet, and some cushions! Gosia started to make whatever she could from cardboard, matches and fabric leftovers. She used to put her desk lamp on the floor so that the miniature room was displayed and reflected as warm and cosy.

In the years that followed, Gosia became an English teacher at a secondary school which meant she had two months of summer holidays. By this time, Poland was no longer a communist country, and various goods became widely available. There was a part-works magazine called ''Dolls House'' which became available. It came with some DIY sets to assemble so she started collecting all of the issues with the intention of building a doll's house one day. After she married, in the process of moving, all of her miniature treasures from childhood were lost.

One summer day when Gosia became bored accompanying her husband on a fishing trip, she began thinking it was possible to build a piece of miniature furniture from scratch. She imagined every step of the process, designed all details in her head and the very next day, instead of going fishing, she went to a DIY store to search for supplies.

She found plywood in various thickness and wood stain. Excitedly, she rushed home and began sawing wood with a large hand saw, assembling and staining – calmly and determinedly. She was an accomplished seamstress from necessity, so she made bed sheets as well. The bed turned out better than expected. It was roughly 1:10 scale but she had no idea about any standards at that time. This was before the Internet's arrival in Poland and the doll's house hobby was not yet popular. She became passionate about creating from that point forward.

When Gosia learned that she was an expectant mother, her doctor advised her to stop working and stay home. Those 9 months were one long creative process of completing one project after another. She finally connected to the Internet which meant she could search for information easily. As an English teacher she had access to many sources of knowledge about materials and tutorials. She met many wonderfully inspiring and helpful women who shared their experiences exploring and creating miniatures. It was during that time that she also













Top right: *A table filled with roses, a cake and some bread with jam.*
Above right: *Soup is served in twelfth scale.*
Right: *A delicious miniature dinner is being prepared.*
Above: *A basket of realistic fruit.*









discovered Fimo clay – AKA her new best friend!

Due to Facebook and Instagram exposure, a woman from the US asked Gosia if she would make some roses as a commission. Gosia was not certain that the quality of her miniature work was acceptable enough to take payment, nevertheless she agreed. This first customer liked her miniature artwork so much that she promptly requested other items. After those sales, multiple people began asking for miniature food and flowers. This all came at precisely the right time as Gosia had been experiencing some difficult changes in her personal life.

She had two daughters to feed when she became the sole source of income for the family. The awareness that she had the ability to create extra earnings allowed her to make important life changing decisions. First, she gave up the full-time work at the state school and became a substitute teacher. Right away she focused her time on becoming proficient at making miniatures.

She began attending some miniature shows in The Netherlands. It was at that event that she met a wonderfully supportive person named Rika van Nellesteijn. If not for all of the consistent encouragement from her friend Rika, she might not have put so much effort into trying to perfect her skills in miniature creations, and her life would not have the same sense of fulfilment.

In 2015 she was invited to the Miniature Show in Chicago organised by Greg Madl. This was her first miniature show in the US. At that event she was awarded the first prize in the Miniature Art Prize (MAP) competition for her roses and raspberries. In addition, she began running workshops at the miniature shows. This became a yearly

Above: ***Cheese blocks with fruit.***

> ‘A kind gentleman bought a large amount of her miniatures. Later she learned that he was a prince from Qatar.’











Top: *A basket full of fresh peaches.*
Above: *Gosia also makes realistic plants in miniature.*
Below right: *A strawberry cake with sweet icing.*

pilgrimage until Covid-19 stopped all public events in 2020.

While Gosia has an Etsy store, she also takes custom orders through Facebook and Instagram. When she was at Kensington in 2019 at the Christmas Show, a kind gentleman bought a large amount of her miniatures. Later she learned that he was a prince from Qatar. As someone who has witnessed this Prince multiple times visit exceptional IGMA miniaturists and sweepingly purchase multiple samples from every table that he selects from artisans he finds to be extraordinary, I have been assured that these items go into his own museum next to his home in the Middle East.



Gosia remarked that she sees the realism that people are now achieving in miniature is constantly intensifying. It has been reported that during the pandemic, countless young people have become interested and invested in the art form of miniatures. People are allowed their creative imaginations to take flight, in order to help mentally survive the lack of human interaction that we all had previously taken for granted.

Gosia feels as though she owes a lot to people who made it possible for her to grow her business by sharing her work with their friends, and on social media. She is in a particularly good place in life today, so she has a great deal of gratitude to the many art lovers, most of whom she has never met, but who have made her new life possible.

Visit the world of servants at palatial Barkertom Court



In the concluding part of our tour of Thomas Murray's seventy-room mansion, we are guided through the rooms that are very much behind the scenes

BY SANDRA HARDING

In part one of Barkertom Court in issue 345, Thomas Murray, the creator of this magnificent building, talked about the state rooms of the house and the family.

In case you need reminding, the house measures 7.5 feet wide by 3.5 feet deep and 5 feet 2'' high, what one might call ''a whopper'' or, very large if you prefer! It has an incredible seventy rooms, each one decorated and furnished to perfection.

It was built from 16 sheets of 8 x 49mm MDF and has 126 windows, 88 doors, seven staircases, and is lit by 214 metres of copper tape and 10 transformers. It's loosely based on almost every British country house Thomas has visited, using ideas from them all.

In part two, featured in issue 348, Thomas told you about the family rooms and bedrooms, and now we are delighted to show you the staff quarters. As before, Thomas will tell you about it in his own way.

The Staff House

Upon entering the door hidden behind the picture we leave all the splendour behind and enter the world of the servants.

Ascending the narrow stairs we enter the long attic hallway, which in real life terms would measure 70ft x 6 ft. This corridor, lit by three skylights, leads to three nurseries, nine staff bedrooms and a potty room with a door leading to the parapet of the house. At either end of the hall are two small rooms, one a housemaids' closet, the other a single bedroom.

Leaving the attic we descend the 127 steps to the basement, passing behind the family and state rooms totally unseen, and we arrive in the right outside the butler's bedroom. Other bedrooms on this floor include the housekeeper's parlour, cook's bedroom, and six more staff bedrooms, along with several settle beds along the corridors for some of the younger members of staff.

Turning right and down to the end of the corridor on the left we enter the laundry. This room is hot and damp with three fires constantly heating water to deal with the large amount of linen to be washed, dried, pressed and stored neatly in the linen room next door. Netty and Betty, despite working hard all week, seem to know all the gossip from both upstairs and down.



Our next room is the butler's pantry. This room is used by Mr Salver and the footmen to ensure that everything is in order for their graces and their guests. Moving along the corridor we pass by the hallway on the right, with a staff toilet and two staff bedrooms, and arrive at the wine cellar — records of its contents are meticulously kept by Mr Salver.

Then comes the first of the rooms controlled by Jennifer the cook. The meat stores feature several hanging carcasses and two butcher's blocks where the meat is prepared before being brought to the kitchen. We next arrive in the servants' hall with a large fireplace, four big tables and servant bells.

In the large kitchen an open fire with roasting spits, working crane, bread ovens and a sauce-cooking stove cover one entire wall. Lining the rest of the walls are large wooden dressers displaying Delph and copper pots. Down a small corridor are more rooms including the stillroom, where all the washing up is done and water is heated for the house and kitchens, and a small bedroom for the stillroom maids. At the end of the corridor is a

















> This room is hot and damp with three fires constantly heating water to deal with the large amount of linen to be washed

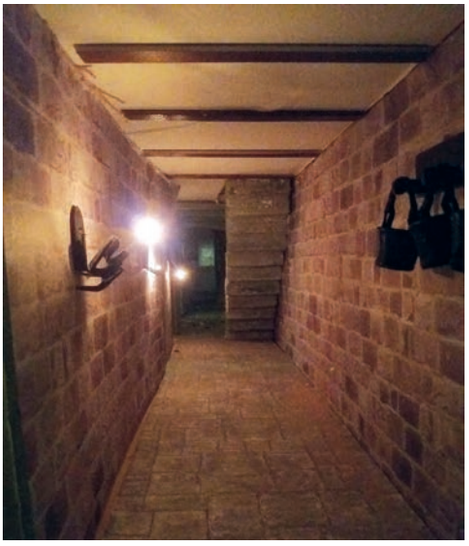














generous pantry storing all the necessary provisions.

Concluding our tour of the staff house we now go through the door to the back of the pantry and take the stairs leading to the dining rooms. Turning right takes us into the garden hallway and towards the back door leading to the formal gardens — these are based on the gardens at Hampton Court Palace with two walled gardens.

I do hope that you have enjoyed your tour of the palatial Barkertom Court, home of the Duke and Duchess of CastleDiva. You can follow my progress and future projects on Facebook and Instagram @thomasmurrayminiatures.

How to light up little cabinets & houses

In the latest part of his series on electrifying your house Carl looks at the options available for lighting smaller scale pieces



BY CARL R SAHLBERG



Let me start this chapter by reminding you that we are wiring all of our projects with Direct Current and not Alternating Current. Although the power supply is called an AC-DC adapter, it is the output we need to look at and see if it says we have an output of 12 volts DC. My 2-amp power supply shows this: Output: 12V–2.0A.

You will notice that a DC power supply also has the output marked with a + and -. The plus is positive and may have a red wire. The – is negative and may have a black wire. Even looking at the battery pack or the button batteries we see the +, for positive, and the– for negative, and will have a red and black connection wire coming from the unit that houses the battery. Even if you purchase single LEDs, they will come with one red wire and one black wire to show the polarity of the LED. Now we begin to see 'colour coding' creeping into our wiring and believe me, wiring begins to become much easier.

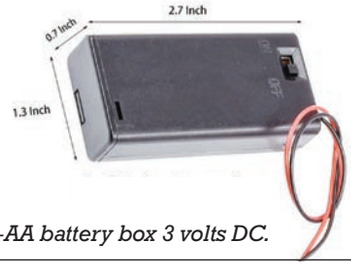
As we move on to actually wiring our different displays and doll's houses, you will see how easy it becomes simply by using one black and one red wire throughout our project. Know also that you can connect any red wire from any fixture to any red wire running within your project and like-wise for the black. The black can be connected to any black run throughout the project. If you have a light fixture with two white wires simply mark one red and one black.

One reason it is hard to get started with your wiring is that there are several different options for components and more than one way to run your wires. I am trying to write this as simply as I can but also to give you as many different options and procedures so you can find the best way to wire your project.

Following up from our last article, the first thing we need to do is to select our power source and for the smaller 1/144th scale through 1/48th scale we have the following power sources to select.

Each provide 3-volts of power which will light any size single LED. The difference is the overall size of each unit and difference in amount of power each can provide. There are smaller batteries that provide 3 volts but they will not last very long and one will have to keep changing the battery. On the good side, each will light any size LED and there is no power connector needed. You simply connect the red and black wire coming from the unit directly to one or more LEDs. The single 2032 battery can easily light one to ten single LEDs but will last longer powering just one or two. The 2450 battery is slightly larger and therefor will last longer than when using the

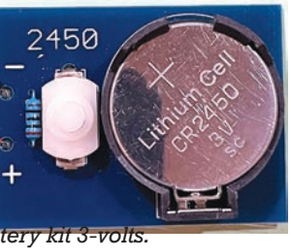
Above: *AC/DC adapter information.*
Below: *Shown are four choices for a 3 volt power source.*



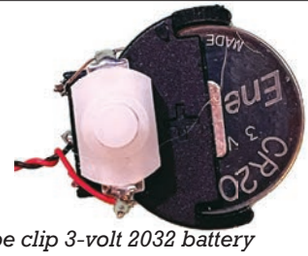
2-AA battery box 3 volts DC.



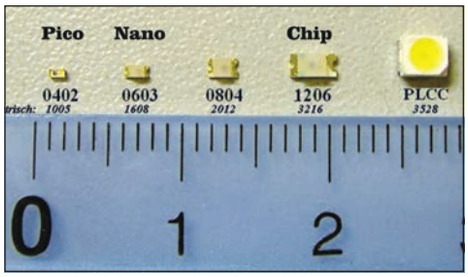
2-AA battery box 3 volts DC.

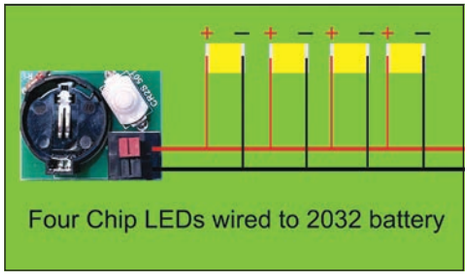


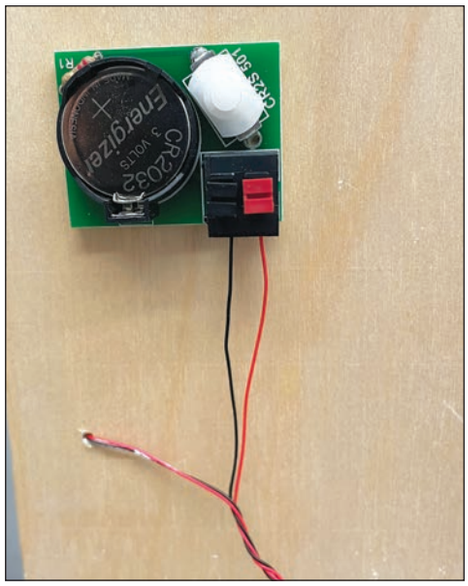
2450 battery kit 3-volts.



Horseshoe clip 3-volt 2032 battery









Top: *Some of the many sizes of LEDs to choose from.*

2032. If you will have more than ten LEDs you should consider one of the two AA battery boxes. The two AA batteries will outlast both of the coin batteries and certainly could be used to power a single LED. So, it really comes down to size and where can you conceal or hide your power source.

The only other item you need is to select the LED you want to use to light your project and LEDs come in a very large variety of types and sizes. For the most part we are interested in single surface mount LEDs and only warm white colour or pure white colour.

Warm white is closest to the incandescent bulb as it has more yellow colour. Warm white is more neutral without the yellow or the blue of bright white.

The pure white will put out more candle power of light as compared to warm white. For most of the lighting that I do, I prefer the Chip 1206 or 0804 size LED and usually select a pure white colour. If you are lighting a small 144th scale building you might use the extremely small Pico SMD (surface mount device). You will be surprised how much light that little chip can put out. Remember all of these chips will be powered by a 3-volt power source.

Here is how I wired the China

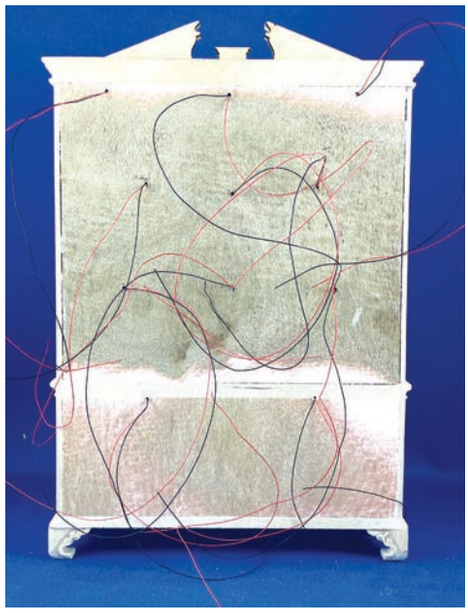


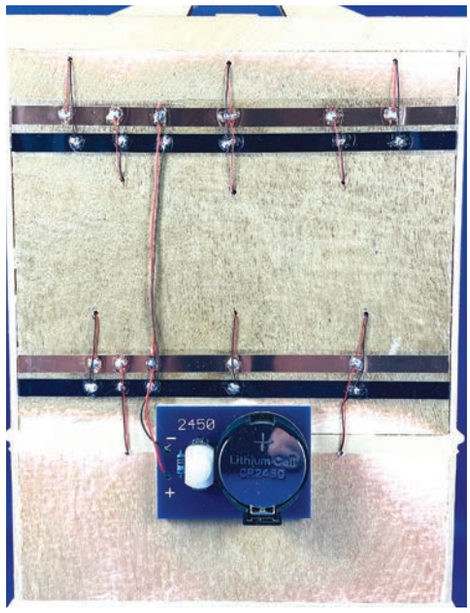
















cabinet in our last issue: The china cabinet was actually wired with one of my 1/8'' LED ribbons which works on either 9 volts or 12 volts DC. I cut a 6'' piece and attached it to the inside top edge of the cabinet. You can see the individual LEDs when looking directly up from the bottom of the cabinet. I could have wired a series of single Chip LEDs in parallel and then connected them to the 2032 button battery as shown in the picture. In either case, the two wires (one red and one black) coming from the LEDs is glued at the inside, very top right edge of the cabinet and threaded through a hole which I drilled at the top right back of the cabinet.

The third picture shows the wires coming from the LED ribbon and being connected to the terminal block of my 2032 battery kit. The double-sided tape is all that is needed to attach the small power supply to the cabinet and the white push button turns the lights on and off. There is nothing to the actual wiring of these LEDs. Just look at the drawing and remember your colour coding. Simply connect all of the red wires together and all of the black wires together and everything will work just fine.

Any of the 3 volt supply sources are wired exactly the same way. You just need to determine where to place the battery power supply so you can run a pair of wires to your display.

Now let's look at one more display that we would like to put lights in. It offers a few different problems we need to plan for. I said previously that the wiring of the lights is not the problem, it is how to conceal all of those wires. With this cabinet I have decided we will be using a small nano sized chip LED to light each internal compartment. Each LED will be mounted in the centre top of each cubical and the wires need to be brought straight back and to the outside back of the cabinet.

We will need to drill a small hole at the top centre back wall of each cubical to fish our wires out and to the back. An additional problem is when the LEDs are on, one will see the edge of the light source so I want to cut a small moulding piece to glue at the front edge of each cubical to block that light. Secondly because we will be gluing 11 LEDs into the cabinet, I have selected the 2450 battery kit for the power source and will be mounting it at the bottom centre on the back of the hutch.

The wiring on the back will be the same as I do on large doll's houses with a solid flat back. I will attach a couple pieces of the flat tape-wire to the back and use it as my connection strip for each pair of wires coming from the LEDs to be attached to. The electrical will be the same as was shown above. Once we get all the LEDs glued in place and all the pairs of black and red wires fed through the





Above: *I have one additional small project that I wanted to wire but I ran into a problem. I am unable to figure out a good way to conceal the wiring in this 144th scale doll's house. I can mount the power source under the table and I can use the same Pico LEDs but how do I run the wires? If you have any ideas, let me know.*

holes to the back of the cabinet, we only need to connect all of the reds together and all of the blacks together and it all will work. After measuring where I wanted each LED to be mounted and began gluing each LED in place, I realised I could conceal two LED wires a little better by drilling a hole up to the floor above and running the wire along the edge of that floor and out the back wall. The rest of the LED wires

I ran straight back across the ceiling, through the hole I drilled and out the back wall. Gluing the LEDs in takes a little patience as you need to make sure the lens of the diode is facing straight down. I only placed a small amount of glue, using a hatpin, on the pencil mark I made earlier and then set the LED into that drop of glue using tweezers. Let the glue dry before feeding the wires through the back wall hole.

With the LEDs in place and the wires all pulled through to the back, all that was left to do was to connect all of the LED red wires to the power supply red wire and all of the LED black wires to the black wire coming from the power supply. I mounted the 2450 battery kit at the bottom centre on the back. I made all of that a little simpler by placing two flat tape-wire runs across the back and soldering the power supply wires directly to each flat-tape run. Note: I always place the red colour of the tape-wire to the top on horizontal runs. I then soldered each pair of LED wires to the closest flat-tape runs. With that all done we just need to see if it all works. Give a push on the white on/off button and have a look. In our next issue we will be working with 12 volts DC. The wiring becomes easier with more room to work with and more places to hide our wires but we will be connecting more wires and looking for new ways to attach different features such as outlets, sconces and chandeliers.

As we continue with these articles, I would appreciate any questions or problems you may be having so I can address them in future articles. Please send your questions to info@cr2s.com and be sure to check out my video tutorials at www.cr2s.com.

LITTLE LINKS:

Carl Sahlberg
Creative Reproductions 2 Scale
tel: 001 317 414 3921
web: https://cr2s.com

Leather desktop

Dress up an old desk with a faux leather writing top

BY BRENDA HOWDEN

You will need

- White glue
- Tissue paper
- Green paint
- Shoe polish



Step 1. Put tape around the top edge of the desk.

Step 2. Put glue inside the tape where the leather effect will go.

Step 3. Scrunch up tissue paper and smooth over the glued area. Let dry.

Step 4. Paint with green acrylic paint. Once dry work some brown polish all over. Let dry.

Step 5. Buff it and spray some normal polish over it, which gives it a beautiful, natural sheen. Let dry.

Step 6. Peel tape off and presto – a beautiful leather-effect desk!

we love them

Etsy MINIS WE LOVE ON ETSY THIS MONTH



Gorgeous handmade hydrangeas from FloralDecorMini

■ **FloralDecorMini.etsy.com**



These stick-on tiles, slates and wallpaper make decorating easy

■ **StickandGoWallTiles.etsy.com**



Take a look at this 1/24th scale house from PlayWithUnicorn.

■ **PlayWithUnicorn.etsy.com**

SEE THE ETSY DIRECTORY ON PAGE 36

Vintage farmhouse apron is made to be decorative

Debbie comes up with an easy way of creating a colourful apron that can be made to liven up any season or even a garden scene

BY DEBBIE BOOTH

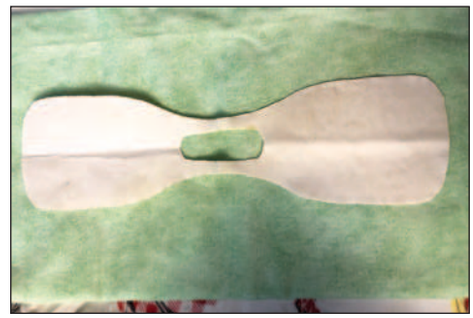
This month I'm starting a vintage farmhouse series with this old style apron.

When creating new miniature items I look at something and think how can I make this an easier way. As a professional seamstress and quilter I learned quite awhile ago that traditional methods don't always yield the best results when sewing miniature items.

This is why I created the term 'decorative miniatures'. While I have sewn for museums, professional doll's house collectors and other miniaturists that require perfect sewing, there is a time that collectors and miniaturists want to add a simple seasonal touch to their doll's houses – a 'decorative miniature'.

This decorative vintage style apron takes after the look of aprons that my grandmother would make and wear. She often used feed sack cotton fabric for them. My grandmother raised 10 children on a farm and would sew my mothers' school dresses out of the feed sack cottons.

My mother told me that my grandmother would make aprons for the ladies in her quilt guild and hide them in her house. The ladies would come over to sew and quilt and would giggle while trying to find their hidden treasures. She influenced me greatly with the style of miniature patterns I design and make. This apron is extremely easy to make.

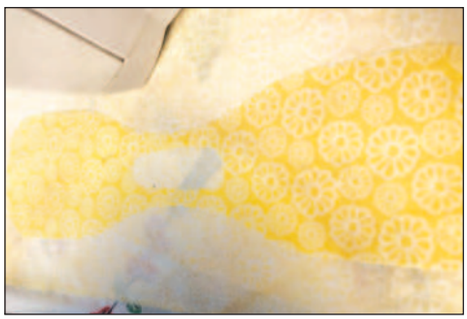


Step 1. Using the pattern provided, draw the apron pattern design onto the paper side of fusible web. One side is paper and one side is sticky.

You will need

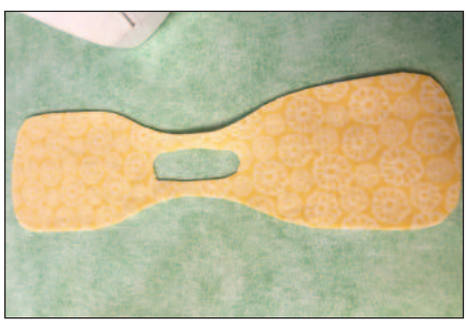
- 1 small package or 1/4 yard of HeatnBond iron on fusible web (double sided adhesive)
- 1/4 yard or scraps of cotton prints – small prints include small floral, small dots, small plaids, etc.
- Scraps of beige cotton for the pie crust
- Scraps of coloured cottons for the pie dish
- 2 tiny buttons
- Miniature hanger
- 1 yard of 1/4'' or 1/8'' wide ribbon for bows
- Needle and thread
- Iron
- Scissors
- Mini rolling pin - optional

Step 2. Trim around the folded apron design cutting on the line. Place the apron paper piece onto the wrong side of the cotton fabric. Try to never press the sticky side of fusible web directly to iron. Makes a mess!



Step 3. With a hot iron (no steam) press for a few moments adhering the fusible web to the fabric.

Step 4. With sharp scissors carefully cut around the apron pattern piece. Cut the neck opening carefully creating a smooth oval look.

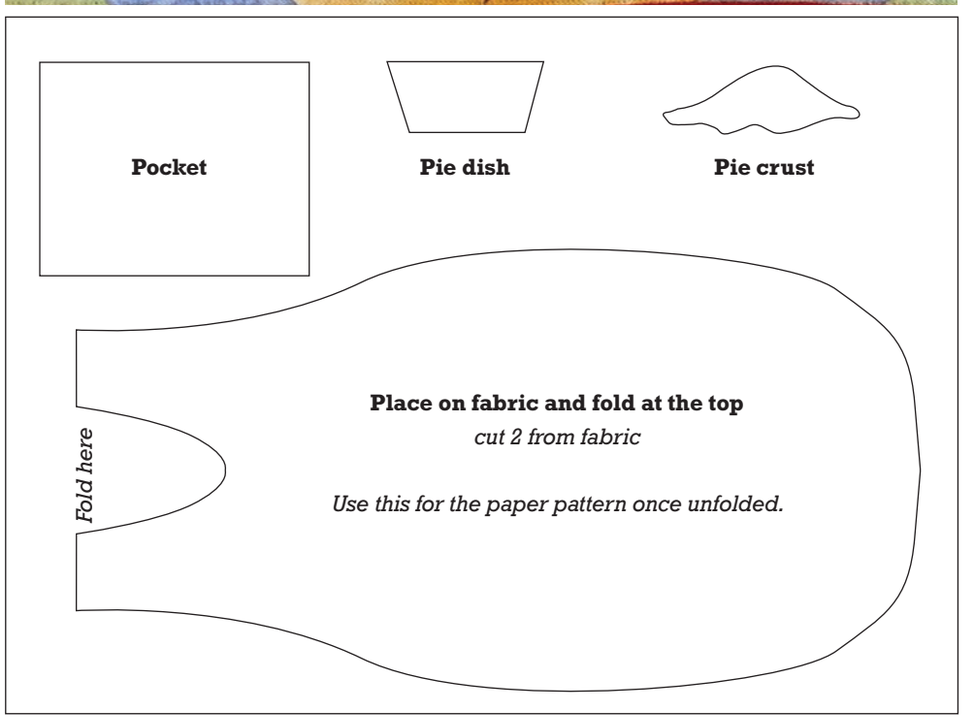


Step 5. Next, tear away the paper from the front of the fusible web. This side is now sticky and can be placed sticky side down on the wrong side of the fabric. Press in place. Trim away the outer fabric and the neck area. The apron piece should now have fabric on both sides. This will be the apron foundation.

The pocket

Step 6. Using the fusible paper backed web, measure and cut a piece measuring 1'' x 1 1/2'' (2.54cm x 3.81cm). Press the paper onto the back of the cotton fabric that will be used for the pocket. Trim around the fabric creating the pocket. Set aside.





Step 7. Draw the pie crust design onto a small piece of the paper backed fusible web. And set aside. Do the same for the pie dish. Take the paper pattern fusible piece and press to the back side of the beige cotton.

Step 8. Trim around the design and set aside. Do the same for the pie dish paper pattern piece to the back of the alternating coloured fabric.

Step 9. Cut around the pieces. Pull the paper off. Now take the pocket piece, leaving its paper backing on for now, and centre the pie dish on the pocket.



Step 10. Place the pie crust piece on the pie dish making sure it overlaps the pie dish piece slightly. The two pieces together need to look like a pie. Press.



Step 11. Centre the pocket on the bottom front of the apron. Sew the pocket close to the edge.

Step 12. Peel the paper off the pocket piece. Centre the pocket on the bottom front side of the apron. Press on the outer lines of pocket so inner part of pocket can be used. Or don't press and sew around the pocket adhering it to apron. Or press the entire pocket to the apron as a decorative look rather than a functional look. Let cool.









Step 13. Sew little buttons on before the bows. Using a pencil, carefully eyeball and mark where the buttons will go, using the final photo as a guide.

Step 14. With a needle and thread, sew the buttons in place. Sew just a couple of stitches to hold in place. The buttons could be glued on as well. I tried this but the glue showed up on the outside and through the tiny holes so I opted for sewing them on.

Step 15. Last step is to make the bows. First cut a piece of ribbon about 9-10'' long. Start bigger and work smaller.

Step 16. Make a bow and then tug at the tales reducing the side until the bow is very small. Trim the length.

Step 17. Make a second bow. Again, using a pencil mark where the bows will go on each side.

Step 18. Hand sew the bow in place by sewing through the apron and knotting on back. Remember this apron is decorative and will not be used or placed over anyone's head.

Make these for different seasons or make a gardening apron and place garden tools in the pocket!

■ *Visit Ribbonwood Cottage at www.etsy.com/shop/RibbonwoodCottage*

> 'This decorative vintage style apron takes after the look of aprons that my grandmother would make and wear.'



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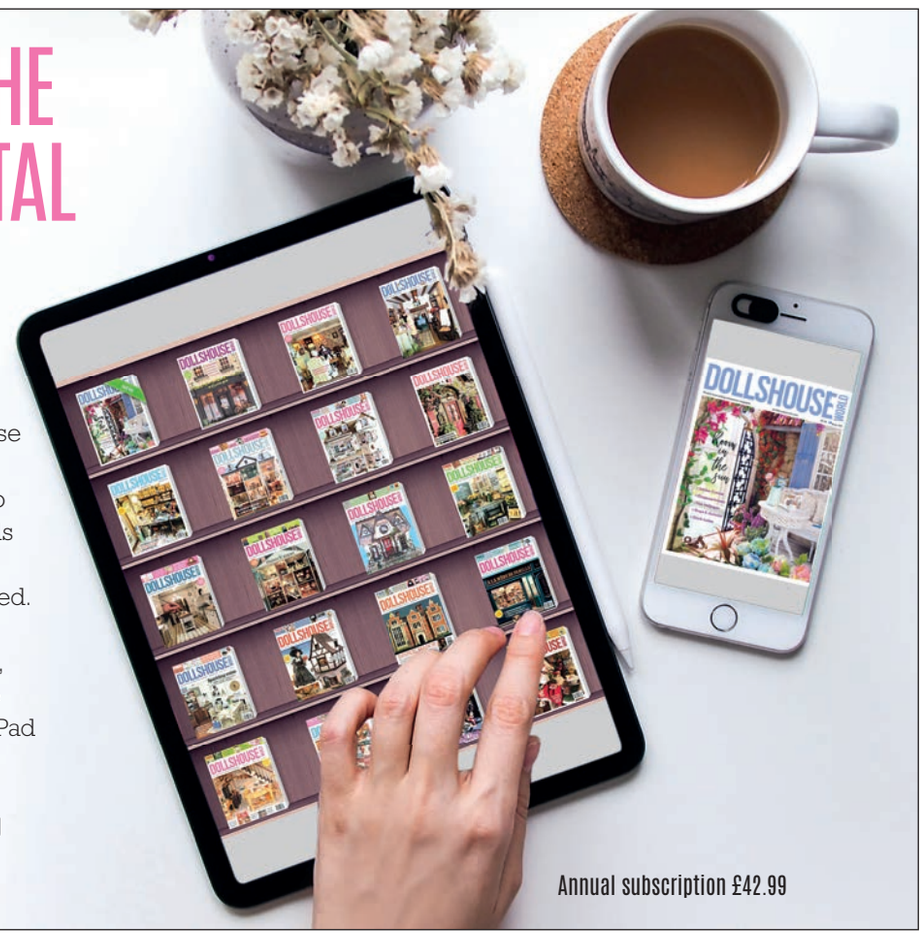
For more miniatures, see our Etsy Directory on page 36.

If you have your own Etsy shop and would like to be included in the directory, please call Maria on + 44 (0) 7730 622416 or email: maria@ashdown.co.uk for details.

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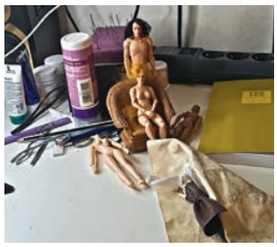
SMALL TALK

THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH MINIATURIST ERIDEN PHOENIX



Hi Eriden. How long have you been making miniatures? For about six years. I bought my first Heidi Ott doll and I found there was only manufactured clothes in Victorian style and almost nobody else made nice clothes for them. So I decided to make miniature clothing myself.

Where do you create? On my Ikea work table in front of a computer monitor. There are lots of boxes with fabrics, trims and laces to use while dressing my dolls. Also, I have a box with threads and needles and a small box with printed patterns that I have designed. I love making miniature clothes and wigs and watching my favourite TV series at the same time.





Do you create at set times? Yes. I try to organise myself and prefer to create in the early morning after I get my youngest daughter to kindergarten. I work until noon and then start working after I get both children to sleep (after 10pm). Then I work until 2-3am. I am a night owl.

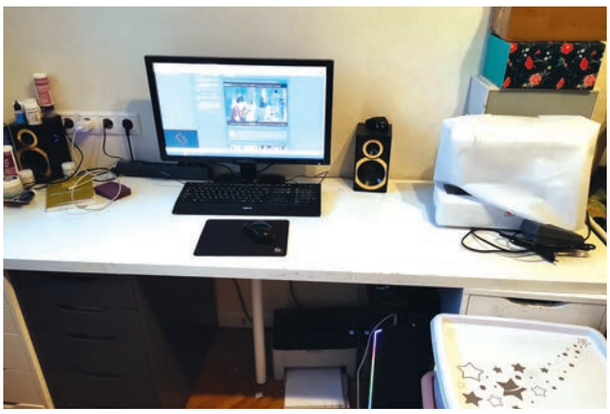
What makes your space for mini making so special? We got our apartment after a relative, who was a composer and poet, left. So there is an artistic spirit everywhere and all of our neighbours are also musicians and artists.

Do you keep your workspace private? My kids and my dog know that they are not allowed to come into my room while I'm working.

Do you listen to music while you work? I love watching historical series. I watch the Outlander series, Poldark, Bridgerton and so on. I love to watch dramas that have beautiful costume design.

What is the one thing that your workspace can't be missing? Textile glue — I use it to avoid fraying and to make the stitches firm. Oh, and to make the edges of the skirts look better. I use glue everywhere using stitches may look out of scale.

What would be your dream workspace? There is a company that makes special tables for artists (see photo above left). It has boxes and containers and stands for dolls and a space for a sewing machine. I am definitely going to buy it one day.





● *We want to feature more readers in Small Talk and we would love to hear about your life in minis and your passion for making or collecting, or both. Just send a quick email to richard@ashdown.co.uk to express an interest.*





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